

Israel to add 2,500 settlement units in Golan

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Israeli government approved Wednesday plans to build an additional 2,500 settlement units on the occupied Golan Heights, Israel radio reported. An interministerial committee headed by Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon approved the settlement building, as well as construction of 2,500 additional units for tourists on the disputed plateau, it said. The construction plan will significantly add to the 13,000-strong Jewish population of the Golan Heights, which Israel captured from Syria in the 1967 war. Syria has made an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights its central condition for reaching a peace agreement with the Jewish state.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية - الرابطة

PNA arrests Islamic Jihad leader

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Palestinian police have arrested Abdullah Shami, the senior leader in the Gaza Strip of the Islamic Jihad movement, for criticising Yasser Arafat, the group said on Wednesday. Shami was arrested Monday at his Gaza City house after an article he wrote criticising a recent cabinet reshuffle by Arafat was published in the Islamic Jihad weekly *Istiqlal*, the group said. In the much criticised reshuffle, Arafat added 10 ministers to his cabinet while failing to sack several senior officials accused of corruption by an official Palestinian National Authority audit issued a year ago.

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Majali resigns King names Tarawneh premier and Anani chief of Royal Court

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday entrusted Fayez Tarawneh, the chief of the Royal Court, to form a new government after the resignation of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali.

Informal sources told the Jordan Times that Tarawneh will travel to the U.S. on Friday to consult with the King on the formation of his Cabinet. The sources also said outgoing Deputy Prime Minister Jawad Anani will replace Tarawneh as chief of the Royal Court.

King Hussein is at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota undergoing chemotherapy.

Tarawneh, 49, graduated from the University of Jordan in 1971, then obtained a masters and doctorate in economics from the University of Southern California.

He served as assistant chief of Royal Protocol between 1971 and 1980, then was appointed economic adviser at the Prime Ministry until 1988.

In January 1988 Tarawneh was appointed minister of state for prime ministry affairs and in December that year as minister of supply — both appointments were in the Cabinets of then Prime Minister Zeid Rifaat.

After leaving the government in 1989, Tarawneh served as chairman of the board of the Arab Contractors Company, Ltd. and as a member of the board of directors of the Industrial, Commercial and Agricultural Bank.

In 1991 Tarawneh was named as a member of the Kingdom's delega-



Fayez Tarawneh

tion to the peace talks with Israel.

While serving as head of Jordan's team to the steering committee of the multilateral negotiations of the peace process, he was appointed ambassador to the United States.

He served in Washington from December 1992 until his appointment as foreign minister on March 18, 1997, when Abdul Salam Majali was entrusted with forming a new government following the resignation of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti.

In the Feb. 18, 1998 reshuffle of Premier Majali's cabinet, Tarawneh was appointed Royal Court chief, replacing Awn Khasawneh.

Majali had been charged with a mandate from the King to oversee the 1997 elections, continuing economic reforms, including privatisation and related laws, and improving



Jawad Anani

relations with Arab states.

But from the beginning of his mandate, Majali faced problems. The passage of a temporary press law in May 1997 put his government under criticism from the opposition and the press and contributed to the opposition's decision later that year to boycott the general elections.

The introduction in May this year of a highly controversial press and publications law compounded the existing troubles of the Majali government.

The proposed law, which Monday was passed by the Upper House of Parliament, has drawn criticism from international press freedom groups and at home has sparked criticism from journalists, political activists and former ministers.

This summer problems mounted starting with the discrepancy in the



Abdul Salam Majali

government's economic growth rates which when revealed reflected a fall in average living standards of Jordanians.

The now six-week old water crisis which led to the resignation of Water Minister Munther Haddadin has yet to be resolved, while residents of Amman and civic groups begin to consider legal action against officials involved in the problem.

King Hussein, earlier this month, intervened by asking the government to investigate the causes that led to the water contamination.

On Wednesday, the committee assigned to the investigation presented a 100-page report to the prime minister.

The announcement of Tarawneh's appointment was made several hours later.



HIS ROYAL Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, visits Wednesday the Royal Air Force Headquarters, where he was received by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mirai Kaabneh and His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, commander of special operations and senior armed forces staff. The Regent was briefed on air force's duties and activities, as well as its training and administrative issues. Prince Hassan conveyed His Majesty King Hussein's greetings to the air force's cadres and assured them of the King's good health.

At Handicapped Championships Jordan's Barghuthi breaks world record

By Munther Murjan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan's Maha Barghuthi Wednesday set a new world record in the 100-metre wheelchair race at the World Handicapped Athletics Championship currently underway in Birmingham, England.

According to an official at the Jordan Sports Federation for the Handicapped (JSFH), Barghuthi's time of 27:07.82 broke an earlier record set at the 1992 Barcelona Paralympics by an American athlete with a time of 27:08.89.

Jasser Enwayrat, head of sports activities at the JSFH

said it was the second time Jordan took part in the championship. The first was held in Berlin in 1994.

Around 62 countries took part in this championship. Jordan competed with six athletes in short distance races of 100m, 200m and 400m. Others events were track, discus, javelin and the shot put.

Enwayrat told the Jordan Times that "competition this time was distinguished for the fact that athletes of different handicaps were allowed to compete against one another, making the competition tougher."

Meanwhile, eight other handicapped table tennis play-

ers left for England Thursday to participate in the Stoke Mandeville Games.

The players will take part in both singles and doubles matches of the table tennis competition at the games that started in 1982.

Enwayrat said he expected the games to be "highly competitive" with almost 60 countries participating.

"We have been training extensively for the past four months. I hope our athletes will do well. It is difficult to predict the outcome until the games get underway," he concluded.

Panel probing water crisis hands prime minister 100-page report

House committee to send pollution file to prosecutor

By Ahmad Khatib
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A committee investigating the six-week-old water contamination crisis on Wednesday handed its 100-page report to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali.

"The government will take action against any party found guilty of negligence, even if it is a minister or the prime minister," Majali told the press.

Eid Lawzi, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice and head of the six-man committee formed on Aug. 4, declined to comment on the findings of the committee.

"The issue is now in the hands of the prime minister," he told the Jordan Times.

Other officials said the govern-

ment was expected to make an announcement after Majali presents the report to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent.

His Majesty King Hussein and Prince Hassan have said that those found guilty of negligence should be held accountable.

The Regent ordered the government to form an independent committee following popular concern over the quality of domestic water supplies.

Many deputies charged that when the committee was formed that it lacked neutrality and translated into the government investigating itself.

The crisis came to a head on Aug 9 with the resignation of Water Minister Munther Haddadin who was immediately replaced by Energy Minister Mohammad Saleh

Hourani.

Haddadin enraged many people by responding to the water problem with a series of contradictory statements — initially blaming it on unusual levels of algae and then on operational and human errors at the Zai Water Treatment Plant (ZWP).

A number of reports by foreign consultants that were leaked to the press claiming high concentration of algae and faecal coliforms in water sources increased popular worry.

Meanwhile, the Lower House of Parliament Committee on Water and Agriculture said it was planning to send the "water pollution file" to the prosecutor general for action.

"The committee has found out that some governmental parties are

seriously responsible for the water problem," said the committee's chairman, Salameh Hiri.

"Therefore, the case must be forwarded to the prosecutor general who should look into it," he told the Jordan Times on Wednesday.

He said the government had not briefed the committee on the results of the investigation.

The House Committee, which launched its own probe into the water pollution problem, has asked colleagues to press the government for explanations.

It also blamed the foul-smelling and murky tap water supplies on extra quantities of algae found in water coming from two main sources of supply — Lake Tiberias and the Yarmouk River.

Toukan, statesman, 88

King condoles Toukan family

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein sent a cable to Ala Uddin Toukan condoling him over the death of his father Baha

Uddin Toukan on Wednesday. In his cable, King Hussein paid tribute to Toukan's dedicated efforts in serving the nation.

Between his tours of duty in Turkey and Lebanon, he was appointed secretary general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1953-1955).

In 1958 he became Jordan's representative to the United Nations, a post he was reappointed to in 1970.

In 1965 he was named Arab League ambassador to Rome. Toukan became minister to the Royal Court in 1974. He also served in the 1985 Senate.

Author of two books, "The History of Trans-Jordan" and "Tribes and Families of Trans-Jordan," Toukan was also the recipient of several awards

including the Independence Medal of the First Order, the Tunisian Medal of Distinguished Order, and the Lebanese Cedar Medal of the Rank of Senior Officer.

A statement issued by the Royal Court Wednesday mourned the passing of Toukan, saying he dedicated his life to serving the nation and the King.

"The Royal Court offers its deepest sympathies over the passing of His Excellency Baha Uddin Toukan, father of the late Queen Alia, former minister of the Royal Court... and one of the first loyal and dedicated men to have contributed to the develop-



ment of modern Jordan."

According to the statement, Toukan will be laid to rest in the Royal Cemetery today (Thursday) after noon prayers at the Royal Guards Mosque.

Toukan is survived by his wife Hanan and two sons, Ala Toukan and Abdullah Toukan.

'Four killed, dozens injured at Israeli biological arms lab'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Four people have been killed and 25 injured in a series of unreported accidents at a top secret laboratory near Tel Aviv that reportedly houses Israel's biological and chemical weapons programmes, the Maariv newspaper reported Wednesday.

In one of the incidents at the Biological Institute in Nes Ziona, security forces were on the verge of evacuating the town's 25,000 residents but refrained after the centre's scientists said the danger had passed, the Maariv said.

The newspaper, citing a report to be published Thursday in the London-based newsletter *Foreign Report*, said four fatal accidents had occurred at the institute "in recent years" without providing dates.

The activities of the Nes Ziona laboratory are top secret

and covered by Israel's military censorship regulations, although foreign press reports say the institute is the centre for Israel's chemical and biological weapons programme.

A former deputy director of Nes Ziona, Marcus Klingberg, was jailed for 20 years in 1982 on charges of spying for the then-Soviet Union.

Authorities have refused repeated requests to free Klingberg, now 80 and seriously ill, arguing that he still possessed potentially damaging information about the work of the institute which should not be made public.

The Foreign Report story coincides with a public campaign in Nes Ziona to halt reported plans to expand the biological laboratory by several hectares.

The newsletter said the Nes Ziona complex includes so-called P3 laboratories dealing

in highly lethal poisons.

Israel regularly warns of the dangers posed by the development of chemical and biological weapons in Syria, Iraq and Iran, but has never acknowledged running similar programmes.

Last year two Israeli secret agents were arrested in Jordan after using a sophisticated poison in a botched attempt to kill a senior member of the Palestinian Islamic movement Hamas.

The two spies were released only after Israel provided an antidote to save the life of the Hamas leader, Khaled Misha'al, according to Jordanian officials.

Israel says the Nes Ziona institute provides unspecified services to the defence ministry, chemicals for agriculture and assistance for research projects carried out by Israeli firms.

Third appointee spurns post in Arafat's cabinet

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat suffered another political blow over a heavily criticised cabinet reshuffle on Wednesday when a prominent lawmaker said he had turned down a post in the new government.

"I apologised to the president for not accepting the ministerial post due to my work at the Legislative Council," Salah Tamari said at a council meeting on Tuesday. "That is why I

didn't take the oath with the new cabinet."

Tamari, a member of Arafat's Fatah faction who was elected as an independent, was named a minister of state in the cabinet reshuffle earlier this month.

He was the third Palestinian politician to turn down Arafat's offer of a government post.

Many lawmakers have slammed Arafat for keeping in his new cabinet ministers they had wanted sacked for alleged corruption and mis-

management. But the Legislative Council, which is dominated by Fatah, voted to accept it.

Hanan Ashrawi, one of the most prominent Palestinians on the world stage, and minister of state Abdul Jawad Saleh resigned from the cabinet earlier this month.

Their departure was a blow for Arafat, who has suffered from a popular perception that his government is corrupt and inefficient.

Israeli forces destroy nine Palestinian homes

HEBRON (AFP) — Israeli security forces demolished a three bedroom house and eight shacks near Hebron Wednesday, putting more than 60 Palestinians out of their homes, witnesses said.

On the outskirts of Hebron, an army bulldozer accompanied by soldiers demolished the house of 38-year-old Ata Jabir, a father of five, on the grounds that the building was unlicensed, the witnesses said.

In the nearby village of

Asama, troops tore down eight huts belonging to local shepherds and their families. The huts were home to about 60 people, the witnesses said.

On Monday, the Israeli authorities demolished a Palestinian house in Qatanah near occupied Jerusalem. Palestinians say Israeli authorities rarely grant them permission to build or expand houses even when they have title to land, forcing them to build illegally.

According to figures compiled by a Palestinian rights group which tracks housing demolitions, Israel has destroyed more than 660 Palestinian homes since the first peace accord was signed between Israel and the PLO in 1993.

More than 100 have been razed since the start of the year.

The group says Israel has issued demolition orders for some 2,000 other buildings in the territories.



A home and a car burn Wednesday in the village of Jarjou' in southern Lebanon after Israeli warplanes raided targets. Israel reacted after an Israeli soldier was reported killed and three others wounded in the Israeli-occupied zone in south Lebanon, the army said (AFP photo)

Palestinians accuse Israelis of failing to meet commitments

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) hit back on Wednesday at Israeli accusations that waste and theft are the root cause of the serious water shortage currently afflicting the Palestinian territories.

"The situation is dangerous and about to explode," said Fadi Qawash, deputy chairman of the PWA, in a statement. "Israel has only supplied an additional 7 million cubic metres (245 cubic feet) of water per annum of the 80 million to which it is committed," he said.

"The south of the West Bank which is suffering a dire water shortage needs three times the current level of supply to meet minimum demand," he added.

Hard-line infrastructure minister Ariel Sharon said on Tuesday that Israel was fulfilling its side of the water agreements contained in the interim agreement on limited Palestinian autonomy signed in September 1995.

Sharon said that the water shortage was due to waste and theft and accused the Palestinians of using the issue as a tactic to hold up peace negotiations.

"These comments (by Sharon) turn upside down the facts by creating a private interpretation of his private and mistaken understanding of the clauses governing water in the Oslo accords," said Qawash.

Left-wing Israeli deputy Anat Maor has described Sharon's numbers as "lies."

The Israeli authorities say that the Palestinians have not built the mains network necessary to deliver water to homes and that they have drilled the wells required of them under the interim accords.

The Palestinians counter that Israel remains in control of all the main aquifers in the occupied territories and that they are not allowed to drill fresh wells necessary to meet the shortfall.

"The water authority had asked permission to drill 40 wells but had only received permission for six — two of which had been drilled and work on four others is ongoing," Qawash said adding that the PWA had asked for immediate permission to dig 15 new wells.

Israeli soldier killed in Hizbollah attack

TYRE (AFP) — An Israeli soldier was killed and three others injured in a guerrilla attack on Wednesday in the Israeli-occupied zone in south Lebanon, security services here said.

The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hizbollah, said it exploded a powerful bomb in the path of an Israeli army patrol near Sojoud, in the central sector of the occupied zone.

"Close fighting with automatic weapons and RPG rockets then erupted between our fighters and the enemy soldiers," the fundamentalist group said in a statement.

Israeli warplanes later raided targets in Lebanon, the Israeli army said, without making any immediate reference to casualties.

"Israeli warplanes struck terrorist targets in Lebanon and

returned safely to base," the army said in a statement.

Two Israeli helicopters were seen landing twice on the site to evacuate casualties. It was not clear if the casualties occurred in the bomb blast or the subsequent clashes.

The attack was also followed by intense Israeli shelling of the Iqlim At Touffah heights, a Hizbollah stronghold in south Lebanon, Lebanese police

said, without specifying if there were any casualties.

The shelling also triggered several fires, police said.

Since the start of the year, 10 Israeli soldiers have been killed and another 78 wounded in attacks in south Lebanon, mostly by the Shiite Muslim Hizbollah which spearheads the campaign to oust Israeli forces from the occupied zone.

Mideast press takes on Clinton sex scandal

'Clinton, the depraved womaniser' — Iraqi paper

BAGHDAD (AFP) — U.S. President Bill Clinton was branded a "depraved womaniser" by Iraq's official press Wednesday after he admitted an improper relationship with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky. "It is clear that the president of the world's only superpower is a womaniser and a depraved man who did not respect his position," said Babel, a weekly by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's son Uday. "The question today is: can a depraved liar who cheated his people and his own family continue to act as president?" the newspaper asked. "How will Clinton direct U.S. foreign policy after this scandal? Will he make new concessions to Tel Aviv and the Zionist lobby? Will he be even more aggressive towards Iraq to please the Republicans in Congress, in the hope that it will stop their efforts to get rid of him?" Babel said. "Whatever happens there will be changes to U.S. foreign policy... the Arabs must hold a summit to face up to these changes," it said.

Egypt says Clinton's affairs hurt U.S. international role

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's press branded U.S. President Bill Clinton a liar on Wednesday, saying his sexual misdeeds have hurt his country's standing and effectiveness in international affairs. "The motives matter little. What counts is that Clinton is a liar who will go down in history as the second U.S. president after [Richard] Nixon to have to resign," the government newspaper Al-Ahram said in an editorial. But another Al-Ahram columnist predicted that Clinton will hang on to his job but will be "much weakened." "The Lewinsky affair is disgusting," opined another government daily, Al-Akhar. "Clinton's sexual setbacks have had negative repercussions on the political role of the United States, the world superpower, in international affairs because he is taken up with defending himself against accusations that he lied," the paper said. A third government newspaper, Al-Gomhuriya, gave front-page coverage to "the Clinton harem," criticising the president's "women who neither bear children nor keep their mouths shut."

Tehran Times defends Clinton over misconduct

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Iranian newspaper run by the conservative clergy on Wednesday defended the embattled U.S. President Bill Clinton who is being probed over a sexual relationship with a young former White House intern.

The semi-official Tehran Times described the seven-month probe into

Clinton's sexual misconduct as a "melodrama written by Zionists."

"Clinton's only crime is to put pressure on the Zionist regime [Israel] to honour its commitments" on peace with Palestinians, the English-language newspaper said.

While sparing Clinton and his Democrats, the paper attacked U.S. Republicans

Algerian, Moroccan PMs meet secretly — report

ALGIERS (AFP) — Algerian Prime Minister Ahmad Ouyahia and his Moroccan counterpart Abdul Rahman Youssoufi have held a secret meeting in an attempt to improve relations between the two countries, the Al-Watani newspaper said Wednesday.

The meeting in the Algerian city of Oran aimed to examine ways of "returning to normal relations between the two countries," a "trustworthy" source told the newspaper.

Al-Watani reported that Ouyahia flew into Oran airport Tuesday and the meeting took place at a state residence at Bouferridj, a coastal resort nearby.

In recent weeks, the two countries have made various comments on the state

Algerian president to address nation; explosion injures two

ALGIERS (AP) — Two people were injured Wednesday after a bomb exploded at a market outside Algiers, hours before the president was to address the nation in a rare televised speech. The explosion rocked the marketplace at Bir Mandreis on the southern outskirts of the capital, authorities said in a statement. The victims were hospitalised, but their lives were not in danger. Nobody claimed responsibility for the attack, but markets frequently have been targeted by Islamists waging a six-year insurgency against Algeria's military-backed government. Algerian President Liamine Zeroul was scheduled to address the nation in a televised speech — his first since January 1997 — at 1700 GMT on Wednesday. There was no immediate indication what Zeroul would say in his message.

of relations between them.

In a press interview Youssoufi said he hoped common borders would be reopened and visa requirements which the two countries impose on each other's citizens would be abolished.

Algerian Foreign Minister Ahmad Ait Abdellah replied in an interview with Algerian newspaper Al-Khabar that Algiers wanted to discuss all the problems between the two countries and not only the question of borders and visas.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Palestinian abducted by undercover unit

DURA (AFP) — An undercover Israeli army unit abducted a Palestinian teacher early Wednesday in Dura, a village near Hebron, Palestinian sources said.

Jamal Hali Naji Amr, 27, who taught in Dura, was grabbed by four armed plainclothes agents as he walked from his home to the local school, the sources said. According to witnesses, the men forced Amr into an unmarked car and took him towards a nearby Israeli army base. An army spokeswoman was unable to comment immediately on the report.

Driver rams police roadblock near Netanyahu's hotel

TIBERIAS (AFP) — A driver rammed his car Wednesday into a police barrier outside a hotel in Tiberias where Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was vacationing in what police called a criminal act. Three policemen were slightly injured when the car hit the barrier shortly before Netanyahu, his wife Sarah and their two boys were due to leave the hotel in this resort on the Sea of Galilee, police said. The car fled the scene and was found later in the city centre, Israel Army Radio said a suspect had been arrested and was being questioned. The identity of the suspect was not given and police did not say if they believed the incident was an attempted attack on Netanyahu. A police statement simply described the incident as "criminal."

Yemen floods kill 5

SANAA (AP) — Flash floods have killed five people and injured seven in northern and southern Yemen, a government official said Wednesday. Three people were killed Tuesday in a valley in the southern province of Abyan, one was reported missing and two others were seriously injured, the official said, speaking under customary condition of anonymity. Two people were killed and five others seriously injured in the northern Sada province Tuesday after a four-storey building they were staying in was destroyed by floods. Last week, 18 people were killed in floods in different parts of Yemen.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19
PROGRAMME TWO

Thursday Programmes
15:10 Cartoon — Animated Hero Classics
15:30 Cartoon — The Animal Park
16:00 Doc — L'Ecole des Fars
16:30 Doc — Blue Water Dreaming
17:00 NBA
18:15 Sliders
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 Science Magazine — L'oeuf De Colomb
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — Family Matters
20:00 The Great Romances
20:30 Drama — Dr. Quinn the Medicine Woman
21:10 Oprah Winfrey
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature film — "Stranger in the House"
23:59 Comedy — Can't Hurry Love
00:20 End of T.X.

Friday Programmes
15:10 Cartoon — The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin
15:30 The Borrowers
16:00 Feature film — "Vengeance Valley"
18:15 French quiz show — Les Cles de Fort Boyard
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 French Programme — Allo La Terre
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air
20:00 Life on the Digital Edge
20:30 Understanding Beauty
21:10 Babylon-5
22:00 News in English
22:30 The X-Files
23:15 Big Sky

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

23:59 End of T.X.
PRAYER TIMES
04:35 Fajr
05:58 Sunrise
12:39 Dhuhr
16:18 Asr
19:20 Maghreb
20:43 Isha

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweileh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4622366
Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811
St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751
Amman International Church Tel. 865897
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932
St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440
Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138
Church of Presentation, Sweileh Tel. 5920146
The United Catholic Church Tel. 4624757
The English-Language

Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190
Evangelical Free Church Tel. 892679
The Baptist Church Tel. 4624052
The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771531
The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Relative hot weather conditions will persist with temperatures higher than average by 2-3 degrees centigrade and winds northerly to moderate to active. In Aqaba, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Amman 21/34
Aqaba 27/40
Dervents 20/37
Jordan Valley 26/40
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 34, Aqaba 41
Humidity readings: Amman 26 per cent, Aqaba 31 per cent.
Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:
Ajloun 28
Jerash 34
Um Qays 34
Madaba 33
Petra 35
Dead Seas 41

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Muddas Halaseh 5519220
Dr. Rabi Sukkar 5856457
Dr. Mohammad Lubadhi 5167914
Dr. Fadi Khatib 5965294
Firdos pharmacy 5661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 4637055
Nalroukh pharmacy 4623672
Al Salam pharmacy 4637301
Yacoub pharmacy 4644445
Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660
Najib pharmacy 5347632
IRBID:
Dr. Ali Shugair 7100069
Al Quds pharmacy 4630321
ZARQA:
Dr. Isma'il Tallawi 903469
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 4637111
Civil Defence Department 5661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192 462111, 4637777
Fire Brigade 4617101
Blood Bank 4775121
Highway Police 5343402
Traffic Police 4896390
Public Security Dept. 4630321
Hotel Complaints 5665800
Price Complaints 5661176
Water & Sewage Complaints 4897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 4787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 4623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs 5661101
Jordan Television 4773111
Radio Jordan 4774111
Water Authority 5680100
J. Electricity Authority 5815615
Electric Power Co. 4636381
RJ Flight Information 44 53200
Queen Alia Int'l Airport 44 53200

HOSPITALS
AMMAN:
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921109
The Islamic Abdi 5661317
Hussein Medical Centre Tel. 5859686
Luzmila 4630195
Khalidi Maternity 4642816
Akileh Maternity 46424412
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362
Malhas, J. Amman 4636140
Palestine Shmeisani 5660707
Shmeisani Hospital 5669131
University Hospital 5353444
Al-Moasher Hospital 5667277
Al-Ahli, Abdali 56641646
Ibtan, Al-Muhajreen 47771013
Army, Marka 4891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 5602240/50
Amal Hospital 5674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)600561
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafies Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44)53200 where it should always be verified.
Information on other flights are supplied on phone 44 (52700) or 44 (53250).

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:05 Sanaa (RJ)
09:45 New Delhi (RJ)
10:05 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
10:20 Bahrain (RJ)
10:25 Beirut (RJ)
10:40 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
11:00 Colombo (RJ)
14:10 Kuwait (add) (RJ)
15:40 Barcelona (add) (RJ)
15:55 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:30 London (RJ)
18:55 Doha (RJ)
19:10 Athens (RJ)
19:20 Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
20:00 Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)
21:30 Kuwait (add) (RJ)
23:55 Larnaca (RJ)

04:25 Riyadh (add) (RJ)
Other Flights
08:55 Dubai (EK)
11:00 Kuwait (KU)
13:00 Riyadh (SV)
14:10 Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)
15:10 Sharjah (AH)
15:40 Doha (QR)
18:40 Beirut (ME)
19:00 Paris (AF)
20:25 Tel Aviv (LY)
21:00 Cairo (MS)
21:10 London (BA)
23:20 Istanbul (TK)
23:25 Larnaca (CY)
00:05 Moscow (SU)
01:15 Amsterdam, Beirut (KI)
04:20 Tunis (TU)
05:20 Antalya (TK)

Royal Wings (RW)
(For Thursday and Friday)
10:20 Aqaba (arriving at QAIA and proceeding to Marka Airport) (RW)
18:00 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport on Thursday and Friday) (RW)
20:20 Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA on Friday only) (RW)
22:35 Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA on Thursday only) (RW)
23:25 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:45 Beirut (RJ)
08:55 Kuwait (add) (RJ)

11:35 Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)
11:55 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:15 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:20 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
13:00 Doha (RJ)
13:10 Paris (RJ)
13:10 Larnaca, Barcelona (add) (RJ)
13:20 Athens (RJ)
13:25 London (RJ)
16:00 Kuwait (RJ)
20:30 Madrid (RJ)
20:35 Larnaca (RJ)
21:15 Cairo (RJ)
21:45 Jeddah (RJ)
23:00 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
23:20 Riyadh (add) (RJ)
00:30 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)
02:15 Dubai (add) (RJ)

Other Flights
06:15 Istanbul (TK)
07:50 Frankfurt (LH)
08:20 London (BA)
09:55 Dubai (EK)
09:55 Damascus, Dubai (RJ)
12:00 Kuwait (KU)
14:30 Riyadh (SV)
15:00 Abu Dhabi (GF)
16:00 Annabsh, Algiers (AF)
16:30 Doha (QR)
20:00 Beirut (ME)
21:10 Tel Aviv (LY)
22:00 Cairo (MS)
01:30 Moscow (SU)
02:15 Amsterdam (KL)
05:20 Beirut, Tunis (TU)

Royal Wings
(For Thursday and Friday)
08:00 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
09:30 Aqaba (from Marka Airport on Thursday and Friday) (RW)
20:45 Tel Aviv (from QAIA — on Thursday only) (RW)
21:30 Aqaba (from QAIA) (RW)

AMMAN — The opposi-
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recently announced plans to
increase fees for medica
services at public hospi
als.
Despite official state-
ments that the proposed
plan will not affect the
poor, Jordan's 13 opposi-
tion parties, from Islamists
to leftists and nationalists,
maintained that the plan
will have far-reaching
effects on Jordanians' living
standards and contribute to
poverty and unemployment.
In a statement faxed to the
Jordan Times yesterday, the
opposition parties argued
that the plan comes amid
a stagnant economic hard-
ship due to a stagnant
economy.

Majali opens three health clinics

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime
Minister Abdul Salam Majali
Wednesday inaugurated three
health clinics at the Third Cir-
cular Hospital Amman and in the
Zarqa district.

One of the two in Shmeisani
district patients referred by
the Court and the Prime
Minister and has a special
unit to deal with patients
from other countries.

These comprehensive cen-
tres will deal with a wide range
of cases, from paediatrics to
gynaecology, according to
Minister Ashraf Kurdi.
Kurdi added that the three
centres will ease pressure on Al
Firdos Hospital, which he said
currently deals with 5,000
cases per day and is experi-
encing a strain on its clinics,
services, X-ray units and
facilities.

The centres, previously
used for other government
purposes, were renovated
into a comprehensive and
modern health centres and will
be added to the Health Min-
istry's plans to establish simi-
lar centres in other parts of the
country.

On Wednesday, Kurdi
announced that the Health
Ministry plans to extend the
opening hours of surgeons at
government hospitals, espe-
cially at Al-Bashir, by introducing
a three-shift system to relieve
pressure on operation theatres
during daytime working hours.

what's
going on
SUMMER 98
FESTIVAL
"Summer 98" cultural activities
will be held at the Jordanian
Cultural Centre, Amman, from
August 20 to September 30. The
activities include:
- Opening of "Summer 98" fes-
tival on Aug. 20, to be followed
by a musical performance by
the Jordanian Group at 8:00 p.m.
- A lecture on "The History of
Jordan" by an Iraqi scholar
with a talk by Lebanese
scholar Ahmad Haddadin (small
talk) by Jordanian artist Sabah
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Opposition urges government to scrap proposed hikes in medical fees

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The opposition on Wednesday urged the government to abandon recently announced plans to increase fees for medical treatment at public hospitals.

Despite official statements that the proposed hike will not affect the needy, Jordan's 13 opposition parties, from Islamists to leftists and nationalists, maintained that the plan will have far-reaching effects on Jordanians' living standards and contribute to poverty and unemployment. In a statement faxed to the Jordan Times yesterday, the opposition parties argued that the plan comes amid increasing economic hardships due to a stagnant economy.

Health Minister Ashraf Kurdi announced last month that his ministry was studying the possibility of raising public hospitals' fees.

In a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the minister cited budget constraints, increasing demand, rising treatment costs and growing population as the main concerns that the proposed plan would address.

Kurdi also stressed that the increase in treatment fees would affect only those who can afford it.

But in a separate statement also issued yesterday, the Jordan Communist Party (JCP) contended that those who could afford hikes in treatment fees already go to private clinics rather than public hospitals. "The study, suggesting an

increase in fees between 25-50 per cent above the [current] prices, will place a heavy burden on people, residents of the Badia, as well as rural and urban areas," the JCP said.

"Such a move, in line with government economic policies, will lead to skyrocketing prices of services and goods without any improvement in quality or increase in citizens' income."

"We are urging [the government] not to take such a step and we call on Parliament and all forces of society to move quickly against this and similar measures, especially in [the fields of] health and education, which will only lead to a decrease in individuals' productivity."

In his statement in mid-July, Kurdi said the revenues collected through the

projected increase in fees will help the ministry finance the training of medical personnel and develop medical services in both quality and quantity.

According to the Ministry of Health, JD85 million are spent annually on the treatment of Jordanians, of which JD38 million go to citizens not categorised as "needy."

The ministry also said the cost of treatment for the military and their families reaches JD20 million annually, of which only JD1 million is collected.

Earlier this year, the ministry increased fees for treating government employees by three per cent. This increase was expected to generate an estimated JD4 million in additional revenues annually.

Jordanian waters unaffected by Eilat sewage spill — official

By Amy Henderson
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — An Aqaba Region Authority (ARA) official yesterday said Jordanian waters have been unaffected by a sewage main break in Eilat that sent thousands of cubic metres of raw sewage flowing into the Gulf of Aqaba last Saturday.

Akef Abu Tayeh, ARA deputy president, told the Jordan Times yesterday that a series of tests carried out by the ARA, the Royal Scientific Society and independent environmental specialists since August 17 have not shown "any noticeable pollution in our waters."

"We have been testing consistently since August 17, when the Israeli Ministry of Environment informed us of the incident," Abu Tayeh said. "The tests over the last few days have shown consistent results and have not shown

any deviation between the samples and water standards."

Israel on Saturday closed Eilat's beaches to the public after an old sewage line broke down, spewing raw sewage into the sea. The main was mended Sunday, but continued to leak large amounts of waste on Monday for three hours. According to press reports, e-coli bacteria in Israel's waters reached 50 times the internationally acceptable level.

Israeli embassy spokesperson Roey Gilad yesterday said the leakage had been stopped. Abu Tayeh said inclement sea weather had played a role in preventing the waste from drifting into Jordanian waters.

"The current, which is southwestern, helped keep it away from Aqaba, and there were two sea storms on the 17th — one in the morning and one in the afternoon," he said. "The first helped keep it from coming [towards Jordanian waters] and the second pushed it on down the gulf."

Managers of tourist attractions in Aqaba said they remained unconcerned about the accident and had been reassured by the results of the ARA's tests of the water.

"The water is clear, the waves are heading south, so we aren't concerned that we will receive anything from the leak at all," said Ahmed Qazawneh of the Royal Diving Centre. "If the weather situation prevails, we have little reason to worry. We have a lot of guests, and certainly we would have evacuated them by now if there had been a hint of a problem."

"The question we now have to ask is how can this be prevented from happening again, and if it does, what can [Jordan and Israel] do together to prevent any damage," Abu Tayeh said.

Jordan and Israel have several agreements that bind them

to coordinate efforts to protect the Gulf of Aqaba's fragile environment, home to some of the world's most spectacular coral reefs. However, most agreements and subsequent exercises in the gulf have been to contain the threat and damage of oil spills in the area, rather than on containing the rare sewage leak.

Abu Tayeh said Jordanian and Israeli authorities will meet next Monday to discuss both preventive and contingency plans for sewage leaks.

Gilad confirmed that the Israeli Ministry of Environment was investigating the incident and expects to prosecute responsible parties if investigations prove that the leak was preventable.

He added that many tourists in the Israeli city had considered heading for Aqaba's beaches for fun in the sun, but Jordan's own water crisis kept them poolside at Eilat's many hotels.

Majali opens three health clinics

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Wednesday inaugurated three health clinics at the Third Circle in Jabal Amman and in the Shmeisani district.

One of the two in Shmeisani will treat patients referred by the Royal Court and the Prime Ministry and has a special office to deal with patients from other Arab countries.

These comprehensive centres will deal with a wide range of cases, from paediatrics to heart conditions, according to Health Minister Ashraf Kurdi, who attended the opening ceremony.

Kurdi added that the three centres will ease pressure on Al Bashir Hospital, which he said currently deals with 5,000 patients per day and is experiencing a strain on its clinics, laboratories, X-ray units and other facilities.

The centres, previously premises for other government departments, were renovated to serve as comprehensive and modern health centres and will be linked to the Health Ministry and Al Bashir Hospital, the minister said.

Denying that these centres would benefit only senior officials, Kurdi said the Health Ministry plans to establish similar centres in other parts of the country.

Also Wednesday, Kurdi announced that the Health Ministry plans to extend the working hours of surgeons at government hospitals, especially Al Bashir, by introducing a three-shift system to relieve pressure on operation theatres during daytime working hours.



JAPAN DONATES TO REHABILITATION CENTRE: Japanese Ambassador Koichi Matsumoto and Intisar Kayyali, president of a Karak rehabilitation centre, Wednesday sign an agreement under which the Japanese government will donate \$27,118 to the centre to purchase a mini-bus (Petra photo)

Microcredit programme begins

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) signed an agreement with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) this week to implement a joint microcredit programme in 20 villages to be known as the NHF/UNESCO Microcredit Programme for Children in Need, an NHF press release said Wednesday.

The joint endeavour is designed to strengthen and expand the NHF's loan programme benefiting needy families and their children which is already in place under the quality of life project and which is reported to have registered the highest repayment rates in Jordan, according to the statement.

Sima Babous, NHF executive director, said: "In its efforts

to keep abreast with new development thinking and methodologies, the NHF is taking a leading role in promoting micro and small lending."

"With its long experience in community development and loan programmes which goes back to 1989, the NHF has the capacity, expertise and networks needed to implement successful and model micro-finance programmes," she added.

Under the agreement, the existing credit funds will be increased with loan capital that will benefit an additional 700 families, thus reaching 4,000 children in need.

Babous noted that in implementing micro-credit programmes, the NHF is testing different methodologies in its attempt to determine the best

practices for Jordan. She added that the NHF will continue to provide modalities that demonstrate how non-governmental organisations in Jordan can play a major role in supporting the government's endeavours to curb poverty and unemployment and in helping to successfully implement the Social Productivity Programme.

The NHF is also getting ready to play a role in the USAID-funded Microfinance Programme, according to the statement.

The NHF began implementing credit programmes in 1989, with the quality of life project, an integrated community development initiative established in cooperation with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Ministry of Health.

Visiting Sudanese FM meets with Ensour, Abbadi

AMMAN (Petra) — Visiting Sudanese Foreign Minister Mustafa Ismail on Wednesday held meetings with Information Minister Abdullah Ensour and Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister Abdul Salam Abbadi.

At the meeting with Ensour, the Sudanese minister discussed bilateral cooperation in economic, health and information fields. Ensour said Jordanian universities offer training to Sudanese medical students in different specialisations.

At the meeting with Abbadi, who is also secretary general of the Hashemite Charity Organisation, Ismail expressed

his country's appreciation of the organisation's assistance to the Sudanese people and voiced hope for closer ties.

Abbadi reviewed his ministry's plans and projects, including its care of holy places in Jerusalem and the restoration of Al Aqsa Mosque as well as the restoration of shrines marking the burial places of the Prophet Mohammad's companions.

The Sudanese minister also met with Agriculture Minister Mijhem Khreisha to discuss agricultural cooperation.

The two sides discussed the possibility of Jordan importing

livestock from Sudan. Khreisha noted that the Kingdom last year imported 53 per cent of its meat from Sudan.

They also discussed joint investment in agriculture.

Also Wednesday, the Cabinet formed an Agriculture Ministry delegation to visit Sudan on Aug. 25 to take part in a meeting on veterinary services.

The delegation will inspect livestock projects and study Sudan's veterinary services.

Jordan currently imports fresh red meat from Sudan by air, but the Kingdom has leased land for raising live-

stock and is studying the prospect of importing live sheep from Sudan in implementation of a memorandum of understanding signed by the two governments.

The Sudanese minister of foreign affairs and Sudanese Minister of Industry Yahya Abu Baker Fathil also held talks with President of Amman Chamber of Industry Khaladun Abu Hassan on bilateral cooperation in industrial fields.

The two sides agreed that Jordan can be a regional marketing centre for Sudanese commodities to other countries.

Parties, associations remain divided over conference postponement

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Opposition parties and professional associations have failed in their most recent attempt to iron out differences over the time frame of the much-touted National Conference for Reform and Salvation but agreed to continue their dialogue on the matter.

Participants in a meeting between union and party leaders late Tuesday told the Jordan Times that the associations remained entrenched behind their demand for an eight-month postponement of the conference, initially scheduled for September.

For their part, party leaders, who have strongly pushed for the conference to issue a "national salvation plan" as soon as possible to counter government policies, reportedly obtained the associations' commitment to set a time frame for the conference within the next few weeks.

"The main result [of Tuesday's meeting] was that both parties expressed their eagerness to hold the conference and agreed on the dire need for such an initiative," said

Abdul Latif Arabiyat, secretary general of the Islamic Action Front (IAF), Jordan's strongest party.

A surprise decision by the Union of Professional Associations on Aug. 2 to postpone the National Conference for eight months provoked a new rift in the opposition, already considered by many observers as toothless.

Although party leaders refrained from issuing public statements for fear of sparking a row with the 80,000-member associations, many politicians privately expressed frustration and disappointment at the postponement decision, saying it equalled a cancellation.

"But representatives from the associations made assurances that they approved both the idea and objectives of the conference and subscribed to all points in the draft National Salvation Plan," Arabiyat told the Jordan Times.

Drawing protests from many opposition leaders who rejected the move as undemocratic, the organisers presented an already-prepared draft to the first session of the conference, held on June 13.

The draft focused on various domestic and regional issues, including halting normalisation with Israel, limiting privatisation and economic liberalisation, and strengthening ties with Syria and Iraq at the expense of the Kingdom's relations with the West.

Leaders of Jordan's 13 syndicates argued that such a wide-ranging platform needed to include implementation strategies, and not only political slogans, in order to be effective. Hence, the associations said, an eight-month preparation period was required.

A statement issued by the executive committee of the National Conference late on Tuesday said associations and parties agreed to continue their dialogue on the issue, but officials could not say when the next meeting would take place.

In addition to parties and syndicates, the National Conference also includes youth and student clubs and other civil society institutions.

The professional associations are estimated to account for 60 per cent of conference participants.

Tourism industry rushes to develop sites ahead of expected Millennium boom

By Dina Rifai
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — It's midday, the heat is excruciating, the dust is blinding, and the noise is deafening, but workers on the construction site of a five-star hotel seem unaware and unbothered.

Hammering away at steel, concrete and wood, construction workers at the Sheraton Amman at the Fifth Circle are trying to meet a deadline — Jordan expects hundreds of thousands of tourists visiting the region next year to commemorate the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Jesus.

"Yes, everybody is talking about the year 2000. There are rumours about some occasion, something to do with Jesus. Everything has to be finished before then," says one worker on a break.

The Kingdom's tourism industry is banking on an expected boom to improve figures battered by two years of political uncertainty in the region that has scared away many potential visitors, according to local tour operators.

"Jordan is working on boosting its tourism, especially at this point in time, since we live in a religiously-rich area," says Mehriz

Abdo, a project engineer at the Sheraton.

Owners of 28 new hotels springing up across Jordan hope an expected influx of tourists into neighbouring Palestine and Israel will spill over to the Kingdom to herald the start of a flourishing industry in Jordan, not merely its climax.

Officials in the West Bank and Israel alone are expecting nearly seven million tourists and Christian pilgrims at the start of the third millennium.

Despite a slight increase in tourism over the last two years, critics say Jordan has not yet capitalised on or properly promoted the Kingdom's biblical sites.

This, they say, has encouraged international visitors to focus more on the West Bank and Israel despite Jordan's millennium campaign, being held under the slogan "From Bethlehem to Bethany — Beyond the Jordan from Birth to Baptism."

"We in Jordan are part of the Holy Land, because the River Jordan is in the heart of the Holy Land, and this is what is referred to in the Bible as 'beyond the Jordan'," Tourism Minister Akef Bitaji told the Jordan Times.

Jordan has more than 25 biblical sites, including the

"Maghtas" — Arabic for a site where archaeologists believe John the Baptist performed baptisms and was visited by Christ on several occasions.

Teams from the Department of Antiquities say they are excavating around-the-clock at the area on the eastern bank of the Jordan River to ensure "protection of its sanctity and its surrounding environment" before the area is opened to tourists by the end of 1999.

The department's archaeologists are also preparing the area where Jesus is believed to have retreated in the wilderness for 40 days after his baptism. Digging has so far led to the discovery of ancient churches, mosaic floors and water systems, they say.

Excavation teams have also found a route used by Christian pilgrims hundreds of years ago, starting in Jerusalem, passing through the Jordan River and ending in Madaba, 30 kilometres south of Amman.

Near Madaba is Mount Nebo, the prophet Moses' traditional burial site and home to an ancient church with a Byzantine mosaic floor map of the Holy Land which dates to 560 A.D.

Visits to the baptism site, once a military zone, were

made possible after Jordan signed the 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

Um Qais in northern Jordan, the site of Jesus' miracle of the Gadarene swine as related in Matthew 8:28-34, is another major religious site.

The Jordan Tourism Board (JTB), a predominantly government-financed but private-run organisation, says it is also working hard to promote Jordan abroad as a major tourist destination, not just an area to mark the Millennium.

"We are concentrating on developing the right plan not only for the Millennium, but for awareness and presence of Jordan in the international market," says JTB Managing Director Marwan Khoury. "The sites alone are not enough to get the people, so we need to couple

them with other religious, cultural, and musical events, and make Jordan an interesting destination on its own."

Though many tourists visit Jordan as part of a combined package also taking them to Israel and Egypt, the JTB is seeking to ensure that the Kingdom increasingly becomes a destination in itself.

Many tour operators say that Egypt and Israel are offering Jordan as a stopover in worldwide promotional packages, a move that has led to a drop in average stays in Jordan from five to three nights over the last two years.

"We need to redistribute our package deal layout, so as to attract more tourists throughout the whole year," said Michael Nazzal, president of the Jordan Hotels Association.

The Editor and Staff of the Jordan Times mourn the passing of

Baha Uddin Toukan

grandfather of their friend and colleague

Alia A. Toukan.

May his soul rest in peace.

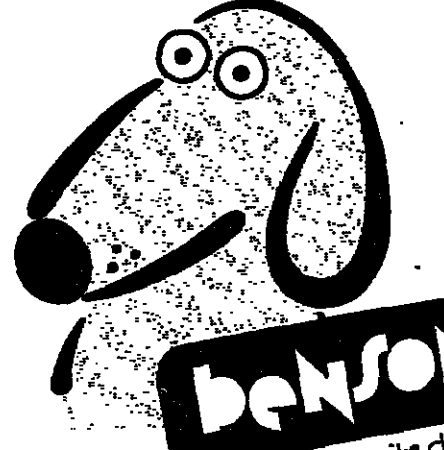
"We want tourists not only to visit Jordan at the current high seasons of March-April and October, but to come in larger numbers during most months of the year."

Despite a consensus on the importance of the upcoming millennium, the government and the private sector appear to differ on the degree of

opening up these religious sites.

"We do not want to commercialise these religious sites. We want to keep them as serene as possible," says Bitaji.

But the private sector believes in refurbishing the sites to make them more appealing to pilgrims.



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what's going on

SUMMER 98 FESTIVAL

"Summer 98" cultural activities at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, to last until Sept. 30, are as follows:

• Opening of "Summer 98" festival at 7:00 p.m. to be followed with a musical performance by Ram Musical Group at 8:00 p.m.

Exhibitions

• Graphic art from Lebanon (south hall), works by Lebanese artist Youssef Aoun (middle hall), works by Jordanian artist Sahel Hani (north hall) at the Main House.

• Works by Iraqi artist Samer Usama (main hall), works by Jordanian artist Said Haddadin (small hall) at the Blue House.

• Installation works by Jordanian artist Samia Zaru at the Byzantine Church.

• Exhibition of photograph "Memory of a Place" by Jordanian artist Hussein Da'esh at the Museum.

FILM

• "Hippie" at the American Center, Amman, on Thursday, at 5:00 p.m.

LECTURE

• "Neolithic Use of the Desert Margins" by Dr. Leslie Quimero, Dr. Gary Rolleston, and Dr. Philip Wike at the American Center of Oriental Research, near the University of Jordan on Saturday Aug. 22 at 7:00 p.m. (Tel. 534-6117).

Wings: Thursday and Friday

Aqaba from Madaba

Amman from Madaba

Amman from Madaba

Amman from Madaba

Amman from Madaba

Amman from Madaba

Facing crackdown, IRA dissidents suspend bombing campaign

BELFAST. — Northern Ireland (AP) — Facing a security crackdown and widespread public revulsion, the Irish Republican Army dissidents responsible for a car-bomb atrocity called a surprise "suspension" to their violence Wednesday.

The coded statement to the Dublin office of the Irish News, a Belfast newspaper, came 11 hours after the so-called "Real" IRA admitted it planted Saturday's car bomb in Omagh that slayed 28 and wounded 220. It was the most lethal terrorist attack in Northern Ireland history.

"Please God, let this be genuine," said Joe Byrne, the leading Catholic politician in Omagh, who visited the homes of seven families grieving lost loved ones, many of whom were to be buried Wednesday.

The statement stopped short of announcing a formal ceasefire. But it cited widespread public horror and an appeal from Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern as a reason to "suspend" their attacks indefinitely and begin "a process of consultation on our future direction."

The dissidents' earlier statement claimed they had not meant to kill anybody but had planned to cause damage only to "commercial" targets in the religiously mixed town 110 kilometres west of Belfast.

That provoked Ahern — in the Irish Republic's seaside town of Buncrana, where three victims of the bombing aged 8 to 12 will be buried Wednesday — to demand immediate declara-

tions of cease-fires from the Real IRA and other anti-British gangs refusing to join the IRA's July 1997 truce.

Ahern made no immediate response to Wednesday's statement.

His cabinet was to meet in Dublin Wednesday night to plan what security and legal moves it must make to suppress the new IRA faction, which media call the "Real" IRA because its leaders refuse to use a different name from the mainstream organisation.

The faction, led by the IRA's former "quartermaster" responsible for secret arms dumps, was founded after the IRA called a ceasefire in July 1997 that permitted its Sinn Féin party allies to enter the Belfast peace negotiations.

The Real IRA began planting car bombs in Northern Ireland towns in February, causing considerable damage but no deaths, in hopes of deterring parties from reaching an agreement on how Protestants and Catholics should jointly govern the divided province.

Saturday's blast in Omagh followed three calls to a Belfast television station and a suicide hotline. Those who took the warnings said the caller had specified that the car was parked near Omagh's courthouse. The bomb detonated about 400 yards away among crowds evacuated away from the courthouse.

The group denied specifying the courthouse. But Prime Minister Tony Blair's Downing Street office in London issued its

record of what was said based on audio tapes kept of the calls. According to the record the first call said: "There's a bomb, courthouse, Omagh, main street, 225 kilograms, explosion 30 minutes."

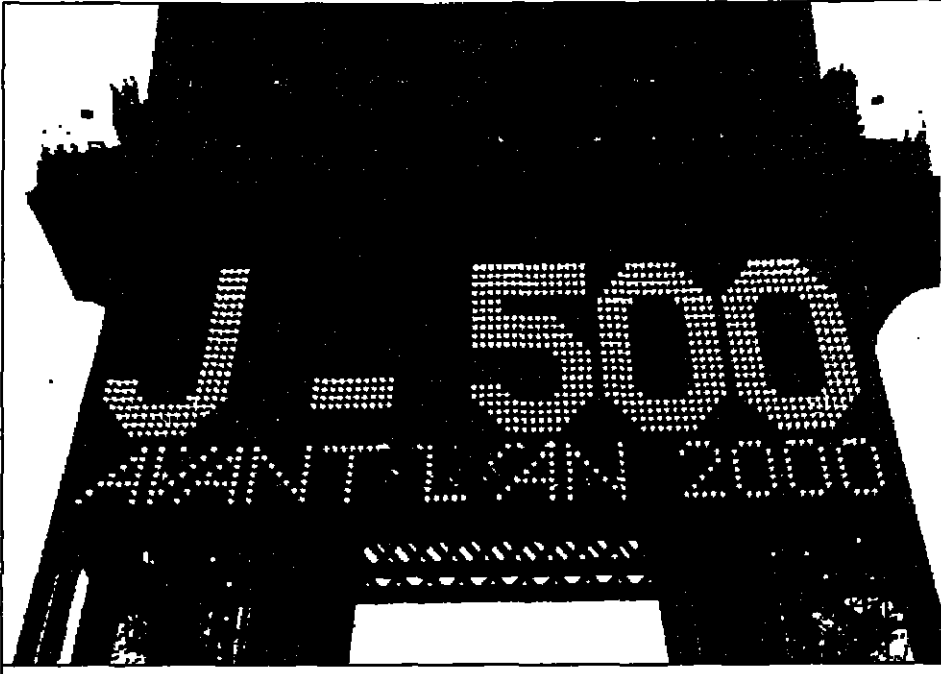
Among the funerals taking place Wednesday was to be one for a 21-month-old girl in the village of Donemana, a father and son in Omagh, and the grandmother of a pregnant woman and infant girl who were already buried Tuesday.

Irish President Mary McAleese will attend the triple funerals of the three Buncrana boys. Her office revealed that one of those slain, 12-year-old Sean McLaughlin, had sent her a poem two months ago about his hopes for the Northern Ireland peace process.

"Orange and green it doesn't matter. United now don't shatter our dream. Scatter the seeds of peace over our land so we can travel hand in hand across the bridge of hope," he wrote.

In a further display of their common grief, authorities in Belfast and Dublin ordered flags to fly at half mast until Saturday — the red, white and blue Union Jack north of the border, the green, white and orange Irish tricolour to the south.

The Catholic, Presbyterian, Anglican and Methodist churches have organised a minute's silence to be observed Saturday across Ireland at 3:10 p.m. (0210 GMT), exactly one week after the car bomb tore into the crowd.



Close up of the Eiffel tower as its clock lights up the 500 days to the next millennium. The clock, which is part of a nationwide festival, is counting down the remaining 500 days to the year 2000 (Reuters photo)

Bangladesh appeals for foreign aid as floods worsens

DHAKA (AFP) — Bangladesh has appealed to the international community for aid as its longest-ever floods worsened Wednesday with waters rising on the country's major rivers.

Finance Minister Shah Kibria told members of the donor community Tuesday that it was feared the situation would worsen and appealed for aid including food, medicine and house building materials.

"The extent of damage caused by the flood will be assessed after the water receded, but because of the long duration of the floods crop damage is likely to be huge," he said.

The official BSS news agency reported that the talks had been positive.

Heavy monsoon rains and run off from hills in neighbouring India have drastically added to the

problem. The flood warning centre said: "The flood situation in the Brahmaputra, Meghna and Ganges basins will further deteriorate overnight."

After five weeks of flooding, the death toll is officially put at 298, while newspapers put the figure at 326.

The appeal for aid came a day after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed at her weekly cabinet meeting Monday reviewed the floods, the worst for 10 years.

The meeting decided to buy more food and undertake emergency measures to help farmers with purchasing seeds as soon as the waters recede.

Experts predicted the floods would last until mid-September and newspapers warned the situation might become as grave as

in 1988, when more than 2,000 people died.

Nearly 80,000 people have contracted diarrhoea, dysentery and other water-borne diseases.

Bangladesh lies at the confluence of three great rivers, the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna, and is criss-crossed by more than 230 waterways.

In a related development, BSS said Sheikh Hasina's MI-17 helicopter was forced to land in western Jessore district late Tuesday because of inclement weather on her way back from Sathkira district to capital.

The premier's chopper and the one carrying her officials were caught in thick clouds and gusty winds and safely landed in Jessore after "zig-zagging through the clouds for over an hour," the agency said. No one was hurt.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Myanmar opposition urges public to support convening of parliament

YANGON (AFP) — Myanmar's leading opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) party Wednesday urged the public to support its call for the convening of parliament, saying democracy was in the interests of the country's 45 million people. The NLD, led by Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, won 1990 polls by a landslide but the junta has refused to relinquish power. The party has demanded the junta convene the parliament elected in those polls by Friday or face unspecified consequences. "A democratic parliament is aware of all citizens," the NLD said in an open letter to the public, distributed hours after party leaders Tuesday held their first direct talks with junta officials this year. "The NLD and other elected members of parliament have a duty to fulfil the people's desire. The officially elected MPs need public support to carry out their duties. The authorities which organised the free and fair multi-party general elections should honour the result and respect the people's desire." "Convening the multi-party parliament also means the beginning of democracy in this country."

British Airways to issue yellow cards for air rage

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — British Airways will issue hooligan passengers with soccer-style yellow warning cards to combat "air rage," the airline said Wednesday. The notices warning offenders they face arrest on touchdown unless they cease their disruptive behaviour will be issued from Sept. 1. British Airways said the crackdown, triggered by a 400 per cent rise in air rage incidents in the past three years, was aimed at drunk and abusive passengers and passengers breaking the worldwide smoking ban on flights. The notices would also warn recipients they would be liable for costs if their behaviour forced the captain to divert to the nearest airport. "We hope the yellow card system will prove the ultimate deterrent which, if ignored, can be used in court to ensure a successful prosecution," British Airways' director of safety, security and environment, David Hyde, said in a statement. British Airways' guidelines state ground staff and crew have the power to prevent drunken passengers from boarding flights and can refuse to serve alcohol to intoxicated passengers or those believed to be under the influence of drugs. British Airways air crew last year dealt with 260 disruptive passengers, but the airline said they were rare among the 40 million passengers carried on 300,000 British Airways flights each year.

Money still flows in to Diana memorial fund

LONDON (AP) — The head of the Diana, Princess of Wales, Memorial Fund said it continues to receive donations of about 70,000 pounds (\$43,500) a month from individuals. Money does not flood in at the rate it did after Diana's death a year ago, but "it's still a significant amount of money that comes in," fund chief executive Andrew Purkis said in an interview with APTV. "What you may find is that people continue to buy some of the goods associated with the princess," Purkis said in the interview, broadcast Wednesday, pointing out that fund-approved mementoes bring money to Diana's favourite charities. It's important that the "general public should be able to know which of them have been approved by her estate, by her close family," he said and "by buying those products they can be benefiting the Memorial Fund and the charities that they cared about." The approved goods bear the fund's trademark, Diana's signature. The fund is engaged in a lawsuit in the United States with The Franklin Mint, which is producing a Diana doll and other items that have not been approved by the princess' estate. It says it is also fighting for a British trademark of Diana's image to prevent commercial exploitation. The fund was set up in the days after Diana's death Aug. 31 to accept public donations in her memory and to channel the money into charities.

Prospector strikes lucky with football-sized nugget

SYDNEY (R) — A prospector from outback Western Australia who found a gold nugget the size of a football has sold it at auction for A\$442,000 (\$263,000). Christie's auction house said the price was the highest ever achieved at auction in Australia for an object other than a painting or car. But it still fell short of the pre-sale expectations of prospector Rob Mitchell, who had said he hoped to earn a cool million dollars from the nugget, which weighs 519 troy ounces. Mitchell, a professional prospector for 20 years, discovered the nugget near the goldmining town of Kalgoorlie in 1992 and nicknamed it "The Evening Star" because of the way it shone in the moonlight on the dashboard of his pick-up truck. He promptly buried it in a blanket in his garden but decided to move it to a bank vault two years later when he came home one day to find that his dog had uncovered it. "I think he was getting a little bit nervous," said Christie's spokesman Rob Parsons. At current bullion prices, the nugget would be worth around A\$250,000 if it was melted down.

Thai police arrest two men in AIDS rape case

BANGKOK (R) — Thai police said Wednesday they had arrested two men on rape charges and sought a third on suspicion of passing the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) virus to an 11-year-old girl. The men, 76 and 32, were arrested in Cha-Am district of Petchaburi province, about 150 kilometres south of Bangkok, police said. They said the victim, who is in hospital suffering from AIDS, told police the three men had raped her systematically since she was eight years old. "The suspects are charged with raping a girl younger than 15," police said. Thai Ministry of Public Health records show that as of June, 90,637 Thais were suffering from the last stage of AIDS and 24,667 people had died from AIDS since 1984. It estimates that some 900,000 people are carrying the HIV that leads to AIDS.

'Japan-U.S. guidelines no help to world stability'

TOKYO (AFP) — A senior Chinese Communist Party official Wednesday denounced strengthened Japan-U.S. defence cooperation as not in the interest of global stability.

Zhang Quanjiang, chief of Chinese Communist Party Central Committee's organisation department, met Takako Doi, head of Japan's Social Democratic Party, at its headquarters in Tokyo, a party official said.

"Strengthening their military alliance will not serve stability of the world," Zhang was quoted by the party official as telling Doi. Zhang arrived here Tuesday at the invitation of the Japanese party, the official said.

During his eight-day visit, the Chinese official is to hold talks with top officials

of major parties, including the ruling Liberal Democratic Party of Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi.

The U.S.-Japan defence guidelines are to be on the agenda for a planned meeting between Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi and Chinese President Jiang Zemin who makes an unprecedented visit here next month, officials said.

Japan and the United States signed the new defence guidelines in April to expand military cooperation to cope with conflicts in the region. Some of the necessary legislation has yet to pass parliament.

The revision of the 1978 guidelines, seen by some critics here as a "war manual," has already irked Japan's neighbours, partic-

ularly China which fears it could lead to interference in its affairs with Taiwan.

Jiang's six-day state visit from Sept. 6, the first by a Chinese president, is part of celebrations for the 20th anniversary of the Aug. 12 signing of a Sino-Japanese peace and friendship treaty.

During Wednesday's talks with Doi, Zhang reiterated China's pledge not to devalue the yuan.

"I want to confirm that the yuan will never be devaluated," the Chinese official said. "We will keep the promise for the sake of our neighbours as well." Fears have mounted in recent weeks that the weakness of the Japanese yen could force Chinese authorities to backpedal on repeated pledges not to devalue their currency.

Piccard seeks permission to overfly China in roundworld balloon attempt

BEIJING (AFP) — Swiss balloonist Bertrand Piccard, who failed in his second attempt to circle the globe after uncertainty about whether he could overfly China, has said he hopes to get approval for a fresh attempt.

"We are very optimistic," he said late Tuesday after a series of talks here with Chinese civil aviation officials.

The adventurer was due to meet Wednesday with foreign ministry officials.

"We have explained that our navigation equipment is dependable enough to guarantee the safety of the balloon and other users of the sky," he added.

During his second round-the-world attempt at the start of this year, Piccard's Breitlinger Orbiter 2 balloon had to put down in Myanmar,

A long delay in Chinese authorities' decision about permission to overfly the country was blamed in addition to technical problems.

"We still don't know whether we will travel to the north or south of the Himalayas — we will only know 24 hours in advance," he said, adding the decision will depend on jet-stream conditions at the time.

All other countries surrounding the Himalayas have already granted overflight permission, he said.

The Swiss aeronaut and two team-mates came close to breaking a world flight endurance record last time, having covered 8,473 kilometres in nine days, 17 hours and 55 minutes.

Six different teams world-wide including one led by British Billionaire Richard Branson, are racing to

become the first to complete a non-stop around-the-world flight.

The most recent attempt ended Monday, when the balloon of U.S. millionaire-broker Steve Fossett plunged from a height of nine kilometres into shark-infested waters off the coast of Australia.

In his third attempt, Piccard will only be accompanied by a single team-mate whose identity has not yet been made public.

The Breitlinger Orbiter 3, a mixed hot-air and helium balloon, will be slightly larger than its predecessor and will be fuelled by propane rather than kerosene, Piccard said.

As in all other attempts, he will begin the voyage at Chateau d'Oex in Switzerland and head east pushed by the jet stream.

Japan's switch to bottled water creates garbage woes

TOKYO (R) — Worries about the purity of tap water are boosting sales of bottled water and tea in Japan, leaving mountains of plastic behind in a country that is fast running out of garbage dumps.

Industry officials estimate consumption of small PET (polyethylene terephthalate) bottles will reach 3.5 billion to four billion units this year, nearly double the 2.2 billion used last year and compared with only 640 million in 1996.

After years of self-restriction, Japanese industry started to manufacture the bottles two years ago following a surge in sales of bottled mineral water from France.

"It's a big headache," said Kohji Yokota, an official at

the Tokyo municipal government. "Our current dumps will be full within the next one or two years. In Tokyo, we'll be running out of space for such facilities within the next 30 years."

The city government dumps about four million tonnes of household waste into Tokyo Bay each year, creating land for housing, offices, industry and parks.

By the end of this century, it will have created about 230 hectares from garbage. And unless something is done, the city will have used up its sea space in the next few decades.

To tackle the problem, the Japanese government introduced a law in April last year to encourage local government and

industry to recycle PET bottles.

It hopes for a dramatic boost in the plastic bottle recycling rate of about three per cent last year — well below the 70 per cent recycling rate for glass bottles, cans and paper.

However, there has been little progress, particularly in Tokyo where the soft drink industry and bottle makers have rejected a request by the municipal government to share the huge financial burden of collecting used bottles.

Faced with soaring consumption of PET bottles, the Tokyo government has asked retailers to install containers for collecting used bottles which can be processed into PET flakes and

turned into other products. "The situation's so pressing that we've decided to do what the industry is supposed to do," said Yokota. "But its quantity is rising. In future we won't have enough money, no matter how large our tax revenue might become."

The industry — soft drink and PET bottle manufacturers — recently agreed to build a new recycling plant in Tokyo to make shirts, fleece clothes and carpets out of used PET bottles, the third such facility in Japan.

Yet it will not start operation until the next century. Industry officials also worry if there will be enough demand for such recycled products.

In the meantime, the

Japan PET Bottle Association estimates PET consumption, including large bottles introduced in 1977 for soy sauce, will grow to 282,000 tonnes this year from 250,000 tonnes last year and 203,000 tonnes the year before.

Now only one in four people drinks tap water as concerns grow over quality, the daily Asahi Shimbun said earlier this week.

It said some 60 per cent of those surveyed did not like the taste of tap water as more chemicals, such as chlorine, are added to make it safe to drink.

Also, Japan's soft drinks industry is likely to increase its use of PET bottles, instead of aluminium and steel cans, especially for mineral water and tea that still

have growth potential in an otherwise saturated market.

Data compiled by the Japan Softdrinks Association showed production of soft drinks totalled 13.83 million kilolitres in 1997, up five per cent from the previous year, while mineral water output surged 32 per cent and tea output 10 per cent.

"PET bottles are now more popular than cans. They may start selling PET-bottled beverages through vending machines over the next few years," said Takeo Mizuchi at the association.

"They can't do it with conventional vending machines, but machines for PET bottles do already exist."

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Right thing to do

THE DECISION of the Jordan National Society for Consumer Protection to take legal action against those who could be responsible for the water crisis is a welcome move that aims to make officials accountable for their actions. Dereliction of duties must not be allowed to escape the scrutiny of the judicial system, and citizens and their associations should resort to the judiciary to seek full and proper remedies instead of issuing statements that are only full of accusations.

No matter what the government's report on the six-week-old crisis would say or not, the crux of the matter is that people have the right to safe water at all times and that those responsible for the problem whether directly or indirectly need to be held accountable. This is the only way we in this country can stop the tradition of unaccountability. In this regard we commend the government for committing itself to punishing those responsible for the crisis.

The country faced serious cases of food contamination, abuse of the use of insecticides and pesticides, high levels of lead in their food, but little has been done to address these dangers. There were reports in recent years that mothers' milk was found to contain DDT. Many people contend that the rate of cancer in this country is constantly on the rise. It is therefore refreshing that the consumer society has finally decided to take the bull by the horns on a very serious matter that affects the life and health of consumers by suing some of the people that could be implicated in the water crisis. The new precedent would surely make officials and nonofficials alike more careful in dispensing their duties. This breaking of new legal grounds should set the stage for more legal class actions against not only state bodies but also private firms and companies who could also be found negligent in dealing with consumers' rights.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek commented on the expected reshuffle or entire change of the present government. Under the prevailing circumstances, a mere reshuffle will not satisfy the people, Fanek said. The introduction of a new government, standing for a completely new set of policies and ready to take a new approach to handle current and future problems, is what Jordan really needs, according to the writer. He said the fault for the current crisis does not lie with individual members of government, but with the set of principles by which this government has been guided. According to Fanek, the former minister of water and irrigation resigned in haste. The writer said Munther Haddadin is very qualified — "probably one of the best qualified water experts in the Arab World." Fanek also praise the credentials of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, but added that a government cannot rule if it has lost the backing of the people.

Al Dustour's Jihad Momani, commenting on the significance of U.S. President Bill Clinton's sworn testimony before a grand jury, said the American administration is detested by most of the nations in the world for its hideous patronising foreign policy. Nevertheless, the writer said, the world admires the United States not only because it is the major power, but for its true embodiment of democracy, which according to the writer, rarely exists in the world, even if most nations that claim democracies. The writer said he was impressed by the U.S. Constitution for not exempting the head of the state from being questioned. He said what counts in America is the good of the nation, not the individual. Everyone there is subject to the law, Momani said.

View from Academia

Concrete steps worthy of applause

Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

A WEEK OR so ago, the local press, quoting Jordan News Agency (Petra), reported the following interesting item: "A local women's group has assumed responsibility for transforming part of an old garbage dump into a public garden in what is seen as a pioneering step on the part of women's organisations in Jordan." The said plot of land (about 50 dunums) is located in Marka, a key area in the east Amman district. The project, sponsored by The Productive Women Society, is supported by the Municipality of Greater Amman, which is donating the 50 dunums, the United Nations Development Programme, which is allocating \$46,000 to partly finance the scheme, the Ministry of Agriculture, which is providing "tree saplings and tree planting expertise," and the Jordan Environment Society, which is donating equipment for "a drip-irrigation system."

The news is indeed interesting, and one reads it with a degree of both satisfaction and joy. Satisfaction and joy? Why? Well, many reasons.

For one thing, the intended project is ecologically significant: it is certainly indicative of an increasing awareness on the part of many organisations and individuals in our society of the importance of the environment in which we live. Though serious interest or concern over the environment is a fairly recent phenomenon, locally and globally, we in this part of the world have been responding fairly positively and reasonably to calls for a healthier, cleaner environment.

Undeniably, there are many upsetting practices at the level of individuals and institutions, many bad habits, and many abuses of the environment. Nevertheless, a careful observer cannot but notice an evident shift in the vigour and intensity of our environmental discourse

between, say, the sixties and seventies on the one hand and the late eighties and nineties on the other. There have also been several sincere efforts exerted with the aim of making our environment more liveable. The cleanliness of Amman and other major cities in the Kingdom is just one example of how speedily (relatively speaking) our society is responding. The recent emphasis on ISO 14000 for factories and companies is another example.

Secondly, the said project is important in the specific context of eastern Amman itself. I am amply familiar with Marka and other neighbourhoods in eastern Amman. The overall quality of the environment in these areas is still way below acceptable standards. Indeed, the contrast between western and eastern Amman is quite stark. In the latter, the sewage system is constantly leaking, large vehicles (which pollute both the air unto which they emit poisonous fumes with abundance and the ground on which they park and unto which they spill substances of sorts) make a home for themselves amidst peoples' homes, playgrounds for children are scarce, gardens are not as frequent as one would want to, many sidewalks (if you can call them that) are entirely free of trees or flowers. While the streets are (generally) kept clean, the many empty spaces in the midst of shabby homes are not. In the summer, such spaces produce incredible amounts of dust; in the winter, incredible amounts of mud. Without a doubt, eastern Amman needs a serious face-lift.

Thirdly, we live in a part of the globe whose present-day culture is obsessed (plagued, I should say) with theories, lectures and sermons. We say a lot and do very little. More than opinions, ideas, suggestions and sermons, we need concrete projects that get implemented. We want

acts and deeds. The said project is indeed a blessing because it is specific, precise, concrete, tangible and humble.

"Humble" is also a key word. In our present day culture, we tend to recognise (primarily, if not exclusively) the importance of huge, mythic and (naturally) unrealistic schemes, dreams and aspirations. We worship big enterprises, immense ideas, and great abstractions. We want to eradicate poverty, put an end to unemployment and achieve economic prosperity — all together and overnight. We rarely think of humble, simple but necessary acts, projects, and schemes.

Fourthly, our present-day culture is not very good at taking the initiative to do things. We are generally passive and lack self-reliance. At the individual level, we always expect "others" to do things for us. At the institutional level, we always expect the government or the public sector to do things for us. The said project is an excellent example of the spirit of initiative-taking. But the said project is also a cooperative venture. It is the outcome of the joint effort — a happy marriage, if you will — of GOs (governmental organisations) and NGOs (non-governmental organisations).

Having said that, I wish to stress the point that our so-called popular areas (eastern, southern, and northern Amman, as well as most of the neighbourhoods in our major cities and towns) need serious voluntary work, and many precise, specific and concrete projects such as the one I have just commented on. There is a lot of room still (in addition to the many things that have been done by both GOs and NGOs) for improvement and face-lifting in these areas. And there is a lot of room for personal initiatives and simple and humble projects.

New rules, old attitudes

By Riad Al Khouri

MANY SUMMERS ago, I spent a vacation working as a research assistant at the headquarters of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). It was my first contact with the big bad world of international trade negotiations, as opposed to the neat simplifications of undergraduate texts. In a kind of loss of innocence, I put aside some of the elegant formulations of economic theory and wallowed in a mass of detail regarding contentions in the international trade of textiles and other goods which GATT was trying to settle. As a student of economics, I ended up loving the work, but I shuddered to think of how the rest of the world took to GATT's strictures.

The simple fact is that GATT and its young daughter the World Trade Organisation (WTO) involve a mass of rules. Jordanians will find this out with membership of the WTO (hopefully in 1999). The goal of WTO is free trade: the reality is a plethora of regulations which, though aiming for unrestricted international commerce, can nevertheless be complicated. In the long run, the trade side of the New World Order is supposed to make life easier for all; in the short run, adjustment may be complicated, though not necessarily in the way that some people think.

What then is the reality of Jordan's WTO membership? For the moment, far from making our lives more difficult, Jordan's application to join the WTO has already led to a more liberal and open foreign trade regime, as tariff and non-tariff trade barriers are lowered. Overall tariff levels, the number of rates, and the degree of tariff differentials afforded to different products and industries have been reduced. As a result, Jordan now has only six tariff bands (ranging from zero to 40 per

cent), and the maximum tariff rate is due to be set at 30 per cent soon, with only a few exceptions. The fiscal shortfall is being made up by the Sales Tax, but this conforms to the rules of free trade: allow goods into the country, and then tax them, instead of putting barriers to the actual entry of foreign products.

This is the so-called "level playing field" of which our friends from Washington and Brussels are fond of reminding us. Of course a level playing field between the footballers of Brazil and, say, Micronesia will usually result in a Brazilian victory. The general idea is for the Micronesians to train hard and one day come up to the standard of the Brazilians. In the same way, removing barriers to trade will in the short run mean more foreign imports into Jordan, with the enhancement of exports taking more time.

So as the playing field is getting levelled, trade between Jordan and the rest of the world is becoming less restricted. Nevertheless, the Jordanian trade regime is still full of areas where free commerce is not the rule. Over 20 per cent of the value of the country's imports in 1997 were restricted by law to a few companies, and special approval is required to import a wide variety of other goods. The same is true of exports, with certain goods requiring permission from authorised bodies, and others restricted to export by certain organisations. The latter made up an even higher percentage of the value of exports last year than for restricted imports. Such measures will be phased out as Jordan enters the WTO. This will cause a few companies and some people to complain: such complaints will have to be dealt with, not least by an open and enlightened government and a free press.

Subsidies are also a sore point with the

WTO. In fact, Jordan subsidises some exports (through income tax exemption) to non-Arab markets of sales of non-traditional products (effectively most goods, except phosphates, potash, and fresh fruits and vegetables) to encourage exporters to diversify. Up till 1990-1, Jordan's exports were mainly to Arab countries. Jordan's economy has since suffered from that pattern of trade, as well as the country's limited types of exports. So this subsidy was introduced.

In fact, such a practice is not in conformity with WTO requirements, and in due course the subsidy will have to be eliminated. This is going to make some exporters angry, but the new rules will have to be explained to them, and they will also probably have to get some help in upgrading their products to make them more competitive. Here again, smart moves by the government will be needed, and an unfettered professional media will also help in clarifying this process.

The bottom line is that the rules of international trade are changing, and Jordan will have to change with them. Introducing new laws and regulations is not the only tricky part; getting Jordanians to adopt new mentalities is going to be more difficult. The man in the street still tends to look at the WTO as yet another foreign ogre. This is probably not true: the difficulty is explaining this to Jordanians whose lives have been negatively influenced by things foreign for too long. Is the government up to leading this process of change, and will the press be allowed to play its part in it? The answers to these vital questions are still far from encouraging.

The writer is director of the Jordan Economic Development Association. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Letters

The reservoir solution

To the editor:

THE WATER crisis we currently are facing, especially those of us who live in west Amman, should prompt us to a very simple solution to this debacle.

The late Prime Minister Wasfi Tal (may his soul rest in peace) already advocated and drew our attention to this simple and easy solution. That was and still is to dig a reservoir to collect rain water for each and every household and big building.

If I am not mistaken, the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) does not grant permits to construct buildings unless a reservoir is dug. But I believe many people have evaded the GAM's rule and the GAM itself didn't follow up on enforcing this rule.

Had home owners dug reservoirs (which I believe they could have afforded to do) we wouldn't have seen men and women of well-to-do families in Sweifiyyeh and Um Utheina running after water tankers begging them to sell them enough water just to be able to shave and have a shower no matter what the prices were.

This crisis should encourage everyone to dig reservoirs in their gardens so no one would suffer any more.

Akef Adib Qusous
 Amman

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any issue they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld upon request but only under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing and abridging.

Tourism — Learning the mechanisms of competitive growth

By Waleed A. Hazbun

IN HIS article (Jordan Times, Aug. 1, 1998) Riad Khouri suggested in these pages that tourism could soon become the fuel needed to propel the growth of the Jordanian economy. While I agree that tourism development could become a catalyst to the economy, I fear that too often people assume that this process will unfold simply from increased flows of tourists. Instead the mechanism I wish to highlight has more to do with how increased levels of private investment, international aid, and eventually revenues in tourism may give Jordanian tourism firms (such as hotels, travel agencies, crafts shops etc.) an opportunity to learn to organise and manage themselves, and the sector as a whole, better. This mobilisation of the sector can itself serve, by example, as a propeller to the economy dealing with the pressures of economic globalisation.

As Khouri points out, the foreign exchange and jobs the tourism sector provides the economy are vital to its health. And I also agree that tourism is a sector that has been able to benefit somewhat from "peace." But to understand how such benefits can become fuel for economic growth is not as simple as it may appear from looking at projections for tourist arrivals.

Jordan has had many forms of revenue inflow (such as worker

remittances), but rarely have these led directly to the development of competitive firms and sustainable development.

In particular, it is the metaphor of the Airbus as the future image of the economy with which I want to take issue. I find this a useful image to consider even if the author might not have meant the metaphor as literally as I will take it. In his essay, Khouri writes that Jordan could transform its economy from a "propeller-driven affair" to "an Airbus jetting through the economic stratosphere," with — because of a rush of tourists — no empty seats. The danger I see in this metaphor (and a similar notion held by many in the tourism industry) is that it suggests that struggling firms faced with, for example, severe overcapacity and heavy debt may meet their saviour in the form of a rush of the millennium tourists.

One obvious pitfall is that this rush will be smaller than anticipated and will die off quickly just as the flood of tourists did after 1995. In the end most Jordanian firms may have learned little about the production of tourist services from this period of high inflow. Thus, the fear is that even if tourism inflows continue to increase after 2000 (still an open question), the economy may again see a sinking of investment in creating capacity with little thought about how the value-added of tourism products is

created and how firms and government agencies might reorganise themselves and their operations to become more competitive locally and globally.

Instead of waiting around for the Airbus to fill up the industry, relevant state authorities should be seeking to promote products value and develop strategic management and organisational skills.

If Jordanian firms learn how to make the product of Jordanian tourism better and possibly unique in the region, then the propulsion to the economy will not be just in terms of a short term boost in foreign exchange or jobs, but the experience of producing a world class product in a globally competitive industry.

Key to this challenge is the realisation that international tourism can be a knowledge, skill, and interpretation-rich sector.

This becomes crucial if Jordan wishes to avoid the development of low-cost mass tourism which dominates much of the Tunisian and Israeli tourism sectors. In other words, we need not just increase our capacity (more hotel rooms, tourist buses) but to increase the quality of our tourist services and the richness of tourism experiences.

The actual mechanisms needed for achieving this sort of development vary by firm and activity, but some general strategies can be suggested: The first is that skill train-

ing and retraining of everyone from the kitchen staff to tour guides should be invigorated and performance should be monitored and benchmarked (that is they should be compelled to increase their performance over time).

Another key demand is that firms should learn to innovate themselves and not simply imitate what another successful firm has done before them. This requires both knowledge of the production of tourism services as well as a good understanding of the possible markets.

Some of the most successful operations in the private, public, and NGO (non-governmental organisation) sectors in Jordan are organisations which are not weighed down by old, ossifying hierarchies, which limit the innovation and adaptability needed for instituting the change mentioned above. In each organisation trained and capable staffs should be given well defined tasks and the autonomy to carry them out. Their experiences and ideas should be passed back to management such that a learning function should come to replace the monitoring function of this relationship.

The benefits gained from successful tourism development need not be limited to the economic sphere. For example, the environmental impact of tourism is an issue everyone should be concerned about. The tourism sector

and relevant NGOs could team up to promote both cost cutting, as well as, environmental sustainability by installing water saving devices and promoting awareness of water conservation.

Firms in developing economies are generally thought to be risk-averse and only in search of low risk, short term profits. This sort of behaviour leads to less emphasis on long term strategy, innovation, and reorganisation. The opportunity presented to the tourism sector now is that the current investment and aid, as well as, the expected increase of tourist flows in the year 2000 can encourage innovations, improvement, reorganisations by willing firms. While there are signs throughout the sector of such transformations under way, it is far from certain that these ongoing efforts will be enough to turn the sector into a propeller of economic growth. The tourism sector should mobilise its associations to promote innovation and the state should encourage public institutions to guide these transformations forward.

The writer is working on his Ph.D. thesis on the development of the tourism industry in the Arab World, at the Department of Political Science of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Too hot to handle

By Jean-Claude E

IN THE early days of the computers it was conceivable to operate the machines without adequate air conditioning (A/C). Actually, the very first units built in the late forties had a number of primitive hard blowing fans positioned around the machine like the dome fans we still use now in cool homes or offices where real air conditioning is not an absolute necessity or too expensive to be justified.

A/C is still important today for large computer installations or major businesses and organisations. In early cases a system called "precision conditioning" would be installed. Such a system does not operate a stabilised temperature but also a defined level of humidity.

Modern PCs are more tolerant and can withstand important variations of temperature. It is said that as long as the person operating the PC can stand the heat or the cold of the room, the computer can.

Recently, however, users have discovered that Intel's Pentium CPU for PCs on the market produces more heat than old Pentium models. Must be, of course, must be the PC's casing too inside. The smaller cooler fan that is directly attached to the processor does a good part of the job, but sometimes it is just not enough. In addition, the Pentium II CPU of fast hard disks and recordable CD-ROM drives also produces more heat than previous models. All this makes a PC that is more at risk than its predecessors, because of overheating problems.

Does that mean that

Society on the move

Awards abound

IT IS difficult to catch up with Dr. Marwan Kamal these days. As secretary general of the Association of Arab Universities, Kamal is often abroad touching base with the 142 institutions of higher learning throughout the Arab World which are members of the AAU.



Dr. Marwan Kamal

Recent news on the home front is that a Royal Decree was issued allowing the former Minister of Agriculture (May 93-Dec. 93), a U.S.-graduated chemist, to carry France's most prestigious medal of honour, Chevalier dans L'Ordre de la Légion d'Honneur, created by Napoleon I. The medal was presented to Kamal by French Ambassador Bernard Bajeot in recognition of his efforts in developing and strengthening the cultural and scientific ties between Jordan and France, especially in higher education. Kamal was president of the University of Bahrain and Yarmouk University in Irbid. He has published several articles in scientific journals and has contributed to 28 U.S. and several European and

Japanese patents. He obtained his Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Pittsburgh, and has two masters degrees, one in chemistry from De Paul University and an MBA in management from the University of Minnesota. Kamal is also currently vice president of the Jordan Society for Graduates of American Universities and Institutes and president of the National Society for Social Defence.

POSTPONED DEPARTURE: For those of you who have been invited to a farewell reception for Iraqi Ambassador to Jordan Nouri Ismail Oweiss and who have not read or heard about the cancellation of the Aug. 22 event, consider yourselves hereby notified. Ambassador Oweiss was originally scheduled to end his tour of duty in late summer, but the embassy placed advertisements in the local Arabic press announcing that the reception had been cancelled. Embassy officials said the ambassador would now be staying on in Amman until October. They did not say why Oweiss' assignment had been extended a few months. The ad contained warm greetings of "love and happiness" from Oweiss to all his guests, and his hopes of seeing them again in the future.

SPLIT UP: Over at our national air carrier it appears management was unable to find anyone to fill Munib Toukan's shoes as head of Royal Jordanian's Public Relations Department. Following Toukan's late June retirement, the airline executives decided to dismantle the entire PR department and have dispatched the staff to various other sectors, mainly in Marketing & Sales, headed by Vice President Dr. Majdi Sabri, and Administration headed by Vice President Zuhair Dahman. Offi-

cial have said the move is in line with the streamlining of the company as part of its goal towards commercialisation and eventual privatisation. Some PR veterans from the old days were saddened by the decision, if only for sentimental reasons.

WAY TO GO ANAND!!: Those of you who remember our former front page editor P. V. Vivekanand who left Jordan to continue his career in journalism in the Gulf will be happy to hear that he was awarded the International Journalists Congress "Journalist of the Year" Award. The presentation of the honour took place at a ceremony held at the IJC office in New York on August 16. Presenting the award, which includes a plaque, a cash prize and a collection of rare Japanese woodprints, IJC President Takashi Kakuma paid tribute to Vivekanand's "highly positive contribution to the information media in the Middle East region. Particularly noteworthy are his accurate and in-depth analyses of developments in that troubled area of the world since the 1980s," said Mr. Kakuma. The IJC, a non-profit organization which has links with media professionals in more than 75 countries, took Vivekanand's "long professional involvement in covering the Iraq crisis and the Middle East peace process" as one of the main bases for granting the prestigious award to the Indian journalist. The IJC citation specifically refers to Vivekanand's nearly 20-year-old association with the Jordan Times, and notes that "he interacted closely with dramatic change that the print media in Jordan underwent during this period." The award citation also highlighted the "valuable contribution Vivekanand made to developing the talents and skills of young journalists" in Jordan and several other neighbouring countries. Vivekanand, 46, now serves as deputy editor of the Sharjah-based Gulf Today, an Eng-



International Journalists Congress President Takashi Kakuma presents the 'Journalist of the Year' Award to P.V. Vivekanand in New York.

lish-language daily which he joined in May 1998. The International Journalists Congress, founded in 1975 by Takashi Kakuma, is based in Tokyo and maintains direct presence in the U.S., Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

Jennifer Hamarneh

Too hot to handle

By Jean-Claude Elias

IN THE early days of the computers it was inconceivable to operate the machines without adequate air conditioning (A/C). Actually the very first units built in the late forties had a number of primitive, hard blowing fans positioned around them, much like the domestic fans we still use now to cool homes or offices where real air conditioning is not an absolute necessity or is too expensive to be justified.

A/C is still important today for large computer installations in major businesses and organisations. In critical cases a system called "precision air conditioning" would be installed. Such a system does not only ensure a stabilised temperature but also a pre-defined level of humidity. Modern PCs are more tolerant and can withstand important variations of temperatures. It is said that as long as the person operating a PC can stand the heat (or the cold) of the room, the computer can.

Recently, however, users have discovered that Intel's Pentium II processor, the fastest CPU for PCs on the market, produces much more heat than older Pentium models. This heat, of course, must be evacuated from inside the PC's casing to the outside. The small cooler fan that is directly attached to the processor does a good part of the job, but sometimes it is just not enough. In addition to the Pentium II CPU problem, the new types of fast hard disks and recordable CD-ROM drives also produce more heat than previous models. All this makes a PC that is more at risk than its predecessors, because of overheating problems.

Does that mean that

chip talk



we're going backwards in terms of user-friendliness and that A/C is now a must for a Pentium II PC fitted with a hard disk revolving at 7,200 rpm or more, and a 4xSpeed writeable CD drive? Not necessarily but if your budget allows it, the answer is a definite yes, do offer your PC the luxury of A/C.

For the vast majority of us placing the computer in an unobstructed, naturally well-ventilated area should be enough. Do not for instance leave the machine in direct sunlight or under a desk that is closed from two or three sides.

Because overheating can result in a variety of problems ranging from a disastrous, complete CPU failure to the computer simply slowing down, even if A/C is available and the equipment is well ventilated, a simple extra precaution is recommended. It consists of installing a tiny temperature control device inside the computer's case.

At about \$15 the device is inexpensive and is worth every cent. It is unfortunately unavailable in Jordan for the time being. It installs in seconds, it monitors the internal temperature of the Pentium II and issues a loud alarm if for one reason or another it exceeds 110°F or 43.4°C.

Some brands of computer come already fitted with a temperature alarm, the most sophisticated of them displaying a warning on the screen and even shutting off the system until it cools down to operable temperatures. If summer continues at these heat levels, or if next summer proves to be as hot as this one, pampering your beloved PC by protecting it from overheating will almost be a moral obligation.

Porto: Sweet wine and old lanes full of flowers and gold

By Susanne Birnmeier

PORTO — Is it called Porto or Oporto?

One popular explanation over the name of Portugal's second largest city is that British wine exporters once so fell in love with the place and its most famous product that they would exclaim "Oh, Porto!" whenever it was mentioned.

The Portuguese, however, simply call the city Porto.

The modern city of Porto-Cale is situated on the site of the first Christian fortress.

Porto and Vila Nova de Gaia — or just Gaia for short — on the opposite bank of the River Douro, are proud testimony to Porto-Cale's significance for Portuguese history. Their long-term competitor Lisbon may well be the capital, but the country gained its name from Porto and Gaia.

And port wine is also named after it — even though it does not really come from here. The sweet wine is grown some 80 kilometres further inland on the upper reaches of the River Douro around the villages of Regua and Pinhao.

It is grown on terraced slopes stretching almost as far as the Spanish border. Grape pickers from the estates set out for the vineyards every year in September.

Around 40 sorts of grape are harvested here, and then they are crushed the traditional way — under bare feet for many hours. Some vintners say grapes crushed by machine taste different.

The young port wine is transported in kegs on flat sailing ships to Gaia, where it is stored, blended and bottled in wine cellars called armazens.

The best place to sample the ubiquitous sweet wine is on the Ribeira promenade, on the bank of the Douro on the Porto side, with views of Gaia and the two-storey Luis I Bridge built in 1886 by a pupil of Gustave Eiffel.

air. Even before the days of port wine, Porto was an important and wealthy trading centre.

Gaia, on the other side of the river, was founded by King Alfonso III in the 13th century as a competitor because he believed the Bishop of Porto was demanding outrageous taxes.

Port wine was only "invented" by British merchants in the 17th century. They wanted to establish a trade in Douro wines, but found that they turned sour during transportation.

So the British blended the wine with brandy in order to stop fermentation. The result was an extremely tasteful liqueur wine, and the sweeter it was, the more aromatic it was.

Before the Douro vintners could turn around, the British had refined the process, patented it and, owing to lack of space in Porto, had bought storage space for it on the river in Gaia.

These armazens are today open to visitors in the mornings, usually without previous appointment. There you can learn the difference between tawny, vintage, ruby and white, and taste the different varieties for yourselves.

But Porto has far more to offer than just wine. The "Se" cathedral — named after the sede, the bishop's seat — towers above the city like a fortress. Although work began on it in the 13th century, it was only finished in the 18th. This has made for a colourful mixture which is well worth a visit.

Gold and silver from Brazil were used to make unique treasures here such as the silver panel in the chapel next to the pulpit. The Portuguese liking for tiled walls was turned into a dream of blue and white in the staircase and the cloister of the adjacent abbey.

Visitors to the quarter just south of the Se cathedral are in for a surprise. Rua das Flores contains not just flowers but also gold in every imaginable form. The district is in a pitiful state even though UNESCO has declared Porto part of the world's cultural heritage.

Yet the lanes are full of people rushing to and from sites which still bear witness to the city's once abundant wealth. There is the 14th century Sao Francisco Church,

the interior of which was decorated in the 18th century with more than 200 kilograms of pure gold.

Just round the corner is the Palacio da Bolsa, or stock exchange, where 18th century rich merchant guilds documented their affluence for eternity.

The Bolsa's Arab hall has round Islamic arches, a mosque-style dome and everything is clad in gold and cobalt, making it look more like the Alhambra than a stock exchange.

Also worth a visit is the Sao Bento railway station situated immediately below the cathedral on the Praca Almeida Garrett. Its entrance hall is decorated with giant tile scenes depicting life at the beginning of this century. There are rural and urban scenes, and scenes of festivals in Porto.

From this station you can take a train to Barcelos, some 40 kilometres north of Porto and 10 kilometres west of the pretty town of Braga, which awakens from its slumber each Tuesday for a large market.

This is an excellent place to buy Portuguese ceramics — tiles, pots, plates and bowls, jars and tumblers. The town is also the home of the legend of the Barcelos rooster.

According to one story it saved an innocent man from the gallows by rising up and crowing, despite having been plucked and roasted. It was taken to be a sign from God. The Barcelos rooster took a special hold on Portuguese folk art and has become the national symbol of Portugal.

Another 25 kilometres to the west, on the Atlantic coast, is the picturesque town of Viana do Castelo. During the 15th century it was an important fishing and trade port and amassed the necessary funds to fill the city with splendid residences, generous squares and a cathedral.

This is the right place to breathe in the sea air, to sit and watch the hustle and bustle from beneath a sun shade and to lose yourself in lanes and hidden corners.

Back in Porto, tourists should also visit the younger "old" town, situated on the hill above the cathedral.

Its main shopping lanes, the Rua Santa Catarina and the Rua de Sa de

Bandeira, are pedestrian zones. The magnificent 19th century residences nowadays have everything the heart desires.

The fashionable Cafe Majestic is at the upper end of Rua Santa Catarina. Its art nouveau and art deco interior offers the perfect atmosphere for resting and watching the world go by.

If even these surroundings do not inspire you to sample a glass of port wine, then have another

go at the Ribeira quarter along the river.

The restaurants in the quayside cellars here offer Porto's finest wines and cuisine. Maize bread and Caldo Verde, a green cabbage soup, pastries, fish and seafood are served here, inevitably with a sip of port wine.


Information:
Destination: Porto is situated 312 kilometres north of Portuguese capital Lisbon. It has 300,000

inhabitants.

Currency: Portuguese escudos often abbreviated by the dollar symbol \$ or PTE.

Ideal time to visit and climate: Porto is a good year-round destination thanks to its location on the Atlantic. Winters are mild but wet with frequent rain. Summers are never very hot.

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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Zarqa mayor gives priority to laying off large number of excess manpower

** "I CAN lay off 1,000 employees without affecting the work of the municipality" said Mustafa Fayyad, the mayor of Zarqa, in acknowledging the highly bloated cadre of the municipality. He indicated that 2,400 employees take 55 per cent of the municipality's budget which amounts to JD10.34 million this year. The remaining 45 per cent of the budget, the biggest in the history of Zarqa, goes to implement productive and service projects in the area. "We wish we can get rid of the surplus manpower but the economic and living hardships do not help," Fayyad said.

Asked about a letter he sent to his assistant for technical affairs requesting the layoff of 35 per cent of the 240 workers who are employed in that department, Fayyad said: "The number of those who do not work in the technical department is more than those who do work." He added that a plan was prepared to get rid of all who are not needed. "Everyone not working need not stay in the municipality and we will seek to get rid of him," Fayyad stressed.

Tarawneh: Jordanian labour market cannot take more than 150,000 non-Jordanian workers

** ACCORDING TO Saleh Tarawneh, the secretary general of the Ministry of Labour, the Jordanian labour market cannot take more than 150,000 non-Jordanian workers but, he said, statistics issued by the concerned authorities show that the number is double the figure. That means there is a high number of foreign labour in the market who work without permits," he added.

"Statistics show a lower number of permits and violations recorded since the

beginning of this year compared to the same period of last year," he indicated noting that Jordanians are more and more accepting to work in jobs that were previously shunned such as sanitation workers. "For example, the number of sanitation workers at the Municipality of Greater Amman is 3,180 of whom only 1,071 are non-Jordanians who have work permit unlike other municipalities in the Kingdom that hire non-Jordanians without work permits," he said.

Replied to another question about the circular he issued regarding work after official hours, he said that the circular came after finding out that a large number of the municipality employees were having another work. "As such, they were earning two salaries and it is preferable that work be given to the jobless. As to those who had a second job we offered them to choose between working at the municipality or somewhere else," the mayor elaborated.

Asked to comment on the municipality's plan to get rid of the non-Jordanian labour, the mayor said their number has dropped from 520,000 to 191,000. "Most of them work as sanitation labourers," he said without specifying the measures that were taken to cut their numbers. However he explained that the municipality has given a number of incentives to the Jordanians who worked as sanitation labourers. "They were given 1,250 fils sanitation allowance per day in addition to the salaries plus the health and social insurance coverage," Fayyad concluded (Al Ra'i).

Debate continues on exempting industrial inputs from customs

AMMAN (Petra) — Industry and Trade Minister Hani Mulki Wednesday said any decision on exempting industrial production inputs from customs and covering the ensuing shortage of funds should take into account its expected impact on both the private and public sectors, as well as consumers.

In a statement to the press following a meeting attended by members of the minister's consultative council, and the presidents of Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Amman and Zarqa, Mulki said the gradual exemption from customs duties creates some distortions.

"However, if differences continue to exist between the industrial and commercial sectors, then we'd better go for the gradual exemption option," the minister said.

He added: "Although the ministry does not prefer this option, it will entertain the private sector's request without sacrificing the public interest."

Mulki noted that the gradual exemption approach, which has been followed in the past has mostly shown positive results.

The minister said no agreement was reached in Wednesday's meeting on increasing the sales tax. However, he indicated, the increase will not be big if decided upon.

He voiced hope that both the commercial and industrial sectors would reach a common ground on the industrial production inputs and making up for the shortage of revenues to the treasury.

Japan donates a bus to support the disabled in Karak

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government of Japan has extended a grant of \$27,118 to the Parents Council of Karak Centre for Rehabilitation and Care in order to purchase a small bus. The Karak Centre for Rehabilitation and Care, which is one of the main centres of the Ministry of Social Development, has been providing rehabilitation and education to the disabled. Currently 65 people with physical and mental difficulties are being accommodated at the centre.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET														
HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDAN														
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 19/08/1998														
LAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRADING	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE				
170.000	170.000	ABAB BANK	18.5	0.88	38	2580	580575	225.00	226.00	1.00+				
1.200	1.200	JOB. NATIONAL BK.	13.5	4.22	8	5873	9658	1.29	1.26	-0.03				
1.300	0.70	MID. EAST TRV. BK.	66.3	0.00	4	4000	4060	1.02	1.01	-0.01				
2.680	1.550	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	11.1	6.56	1	50	79	1.58	1.58	0.00				
6.510	2.610	THE HOUSING BK.	19.6	3.23	41	136148	415650	3.06	3.10	0.04+				
4.000	1.690	JOB. ISLAMIC BANK	18.2	0.00	8	5145	9315	1.78	1.78	0.00				
1.900	1.350	JOB. DEV. TRV. BANK	23.7	3.28	3	6461	9819	1.77	1.78	0.01+				
1.060	0.800	BEIT AL-HAL (BETHA)	3.9	0.00	2	450	356	0.81	0.79	-0.02				
0.950	0.810	PHILADEL. TRV. BK.	P	0.00	1	2500	1925	1.81	1.77	-0.04				
BANK SECTOR TOTALS											INDEX: 297.76	CHANGE: +0.48	106	163213
2.950	1.720	JOB. FRENCH INSUR.	7.8	8.99	2	2700	7506	2.82	2.78	-0.04				
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS											INDEX: 127.70	CHANGE: -0.18	2	2700
2.240	1.470	JOB. ELECTRICITY	9.9	5.39	12	7192	10995	1.53	1.53	0.00				
4.030	1.650	TRV. ELECTRICITY	15.8	3.91	8	750	1903	2.45	2.56	0.11+				
7.500	2.000	VRCL. OWNERS FED.	8.0	6.15	2	130	254	2.00	1.95	-0.05				
1.500	0.990	WATL. PORTFOLIO	25.1	0.00	2	600	528	0.99	0.98	-0.01				
1.120	0.740	REAL ESTATE INV.	14.9	0.00	2	3000	2280	1.75	1.76	0.01+				
1.480	1.060	MID. EAST HOTELS	P	0.00	1	500	550	1.10	1.10	0.00				
4.600	1.880	ARAB TRVL. INV. EDUC.	9.9	2.00	3	4750	9500	2.00	2.00	0.00				
1.070	0.890	SARIS EDUCATION	20.8	0.00	1	900	810	0.92	0.90	-0.02				
1.610	1.130	UNIFIED CO.	8.3	9.24	3	2500	2975	1.19	1.19	0.00				
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS											INDEX: 110.81	CHANGE: -0.09	34	20322
4.000	1.840	JOB. CEMENT FACT.	11.9	5.47	5	33250	66690	2.01	2.01	0.00				
4.110	1.650	JOB. PHOSPHATE MINES	17.5	0.00	5	4329	7141	1.65	1.65	0.00				
6.500	4.750	ARAB POTASH CO.	23.4	4.17	4	10500	51358	6.85	4.80	-2.05				
11.250	10.050	JOB. PETROL. RETAIL	10.4	8.31	9	685	7281	10.63	10.70	0.07+				
1.810	1.060	INDUSTRIAL COMM. ACH.	68.5	0.00	6	4300	4945	1.12	1.16	0.04+				
5.740	2.450	ARAB PHARM. IND.	7.7	2.70	56	26524	74519	2.77	2.78	0.01+				
5.800	1.120	JOB. CERAMIC IND.	4.9	8.93	1	1000	1120	1.13	1.12	-0.01				
1.420	0.630	KAFIA INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	1	100	60	0.63	0.60	-0.03				
6.350	4.700	DAR ALDAMA DV. INV.	7.0	5.98	22	9100	53201	5.86	5.85	-0.01				
2.980	1.700	ARAB ALUM. IND.	13.3	1.89	1	1900	5220	1.89	1.83	-0.06				
1.760	0.760	LIVERPOOL & POLYMER	13.9	0.00	11	12700	5207	0.41	0.41	0.00				
1.100	0.670	ARAB PAPER CORV. TRD.	23.5	0.00	1	250	193	0.78	0.77	-0.01				
0.590	0.360	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	2	1000	340	0.36	0.34	-0.02				
1.160	0.760	UTV. CHEM. IND.	8.1	10.13	4	800	632	0.80	0.79	-0.01				
2.300	0.760	MATL. CABLE WIRE. MPAC	35.2	0.00	12	6950	5221	0.77	0.75	-0.02				
0.730	0.410	JOB. SULPHUR CHEM.	7.6	0.00	22	15500	6061	0.41	0.40	-0.01				
1.470	1.150	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	14.3	4.62	5	2000	3590	1.29	1.30	0.01+				
1.400	0.650	TAJWIN SERVICES	9	0.00	19	7950	3972	0.50	0.53	0.03+				
1.300	0.650	UTV. WOOD. IND.	10.2	9.38	11	6800	4352	0.65	0.64	-0.01				
0.570	0.500	JOB. THERMAL RESOURCES	9	0.00	1	500	260	0.52	0.52	0.00				
1.600	1.200	JOB. CHELONING	8.7	0.00	1	350	310	1.23	1.24	0.01+				
1.080	0.660	JOB. NEW CABLE CO.	9.2	15.38	18	8550	5571	0.66	0.63	-0.03				
1.310	0.970	INFT. TOBACCO	6.7	6.08	1	400	384	0.97	0.96	-0.01				
1.320	0.860	ORION CO. VEG.	9.0	0.00	4	800	700	0.86	0.86	0.00				
0.890	0.660	JORDAN STEEL	9.2	8.54	14	62000	50903	0.84	0.82	-0.02				
0.670	0.550	MID. EAST COMPLEX	10.0	0.00	8	15750	8663	0.55	0.55	0.00				
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS											INDEX: 87.53	CHANGE: -0.48	245	235413
GRAND TOTAL											INDEX: 182.42	CHANGE: +0.21	387	421648

PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 19/08/1998

LAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRADING	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
1.050	0.880	EXPORT & FIB. IND. 752	18.8	0.00	2	1500	990	0.91	0.91	0.00
1.230	1.040	ISLAMIC INSURANCE CO	95.4	0.00	1	7750	7628	1.04	1.03	-0.01
0.500	0.340	JOB. TRADE FAC.	0	0.00	5	7750	3255	0.43	0.42	-0.01
0.800	0.500	UNION TRV.	9	0.00	9	16156	8238	0.51	0.51	0.00
0.620	0.250	ARAB FIB. INVEST.	0	0.00	12	23750	5700	0.25	0.24	-0.01

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, AUGUST 21, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) The sun and moon are both in the same degree of Leo and that causes a solar eclipse and a new moon. This is an excellent time to make a long-term commitment. You may find yourself doing this even if you don't mean to. With that in mind, be careful who you hang out with.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can finally decide on a tough issue today, something to do with your home or somebody who lives there. You may have been arguing. You had to air your feelings and so did the other person. You'll reach a resolution soon. That should be your objective.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Today's solar eclipse sets the theme for the next several months. For you, it's about education. That doesn't mean just teaching. You're emerging as a leader in your community, too. If your neighbours don't yet look to you for advice, they will after the next three months are over.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) This new phase pertains to finances and learning. For the next several months you'll be learning about finances. You love money. You love having it, saving it, investing it, wheeling and dealing with it. You're usually great at managing it and you'll get even better. So celebrate, but don't spend too much.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) The sun and moon are in your sign now, which is empowering. Decisions made now will affect your finances. It's important to put down roots and establish a secure base so the money knows where to go. Do your part and abundance can be yours.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You'll notice a recurring theme concerning service and perfection. You'll be challenged to improve your work constantly and you might be the one doing the challenging. Today, you're more critical than usual of your behaviour. Looks like you'll be even more of a perfectionist for a while. Relax and enjoy it.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) It's time to get organised, especially with group projects. You've been encouraged for the last few days to get involved and that

theme will hold for a while. Stop resisting and get active. People need what you have to offer and you need what they can teach. It'll be good for everyone, so make the commitment.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Conditions are changing in your favour. You've been pushing to climb another rung on the ladder of success and you've almost accomplished that goal. You should have several good opportunities to choose from: pick the one that's liable to provide the most security and excitement.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Today's solar eclipse lands on the edge of Leo and Virgo. For you, this means a combination of travel, higher education and career. If something comes up that would require you to travel or go back to school to advance in your career, accept the invitation! If you can make something like that happen, do it.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) There's an eclipse today, right on the edge of Leo and Virgo. This indicates money will be spent, probably on travel or higher education. That's fine. The only problem is you need to be careful about how and where you spend the money. Be sure to do the homework first.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) If you've been empowering another person all week and are about to be rewarded for your efforts. This person can help you achieve something you can't do alone. It's not only your creativity that's needed; it's your money. By pooling resources, you'll be able to buy what you need.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You're almost through the worst part of the storm. You'll see a big improvement Saturday or Sunday. You'll also notice that your confidence level has gone up because, no matter what happens, you will make it through. And you'll be a lot stronger when you do.

Birthstone of August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

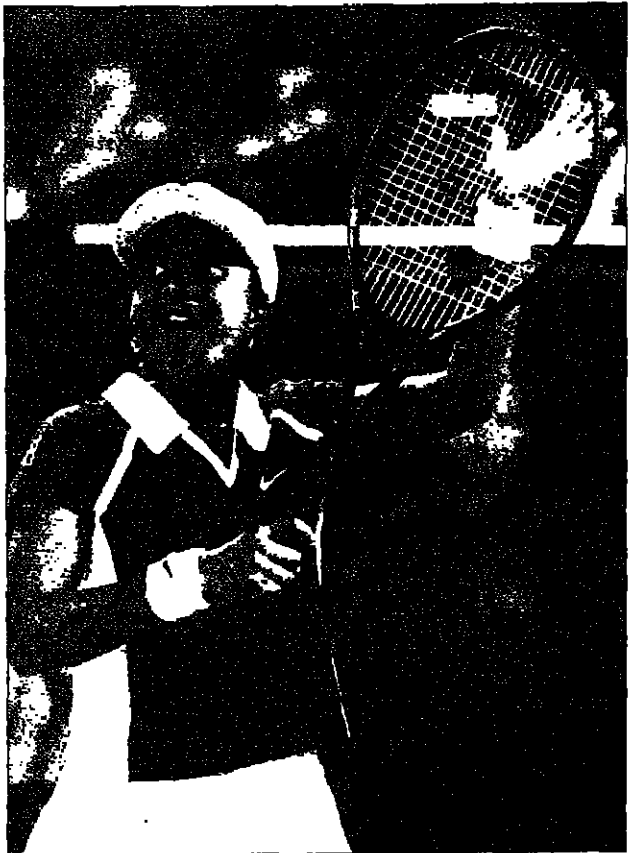
ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You're lucky in games, spend too much money. You only need one more win in the lottery. One note of caution: don't spend too much time with one friend if it would make you jealous. You will have to make a decision; there is no if.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Your nest is all stirred up and don't worry. Go ahead and take the action you've been contemplating. There will be a couple of problems that need to be dealt with, but that's okay. If you push hard now you can get everything completed by tomorrow. Do it for love and even the hard stuff will be easier.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You're smart, but it's because you ask questions. During the next phase, you'll be able to dole out the answers. That's why you suffered all this information, remember? Not to worry, you're going to be great — if you're not already. If you're already great you'll only get better.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) For the next several weeks, you'll be more assertive about getting the money you deserve. You'll also be more aggressive about spending it. Quite a bit of money could pass through your hands during this phase. Set your mind to save a certain amount, otherwise you could end up in debt.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) The bottom line is that you are awesome! You can have almost anything you want today. What will it be? Fame? Fortune? Romance? All of the above? Be diplomatic, but assertive. Move quickly but decisively. Be forceful, dynamic and insistent, yet gentle and compassionate. Sound fun? Show everybody what a



Sonya Jeyaseelan, of Toronto, celebrates after scoring a point against Irina Spirlea of Romania at the du Maurier Open in Montreal (AP Photo)



Germany's Steffi Graf returns to Virginia Ruano-Pascual of Spain. Graf beat Ruano-Pascual 6-0, 6-1 to move on to the next round (AP Photo)

Graf returning to form in Montreal Open

MONTREAL (AP) — At a time when brash teens are attracting much of the spotlight in women's tennis, Steffi Graf proved in the du Maurier Canadian Open tennis tournament that she isn't finished yet.

Graf, 29, hampered by injuries in the last year, showed flashes of brilliance Tuesday in her second-round match against Spain's Virginia Ruano-Pascual, needing only 41 minutes for 6-0, 6-1 victory.

"I was surprised that I was feeling that good because I've been training hard for the past 10 days," Graf said. "I cut down on practice because I've been feeling a bit tired. But today I was going for it and hitting the balls. I was really going for my forehand and my serve, and things have been holding up physically for me since June."

Graf, winner of 21 grand-slam singles titles and at one time the world's top-ranked player for 374 weeks, missed seven months after undergoing left knee surgery just over a year ago.

The German has also battled ankle and shoulder injuries, and has played in only eight tournaments this year.

"There were serious doubts if I could do it and come back," she said. "It took me a lot of time to get used to all the injuries, and during that period there were times when I wasn't quite sure that I could hang on."

In a battle of veterans ear-



France's Mary Pierce stands on the umpire's chair to dispute a call at the du Maurier Open in Montreal. Pierce lost to Mary Joe Fernandez 6-1, 6-1 (AP Photo)

lier on center court, 13th-seeded Mary Pierce of France was soundly beaten by American Mary Joe Fernandez 6-1, 6-1.

was forced to withdraw from last week's tour stop in Los Angeles.

"I'm not upset, because I know that I wasn't ready to play," Pierce said. "But my confidence is fine. I know that if I get fit, and get back into game shape, I'll be OK."

Fernandez, a former top-five player, has also suffered from injuries. She underwent wrist surgery at the end of 1997 and is playing in only her third tournament this year.

"The last six or seven months have been really tough," said Fernandez, ranked 67th by the WTA. "And right now on the court, I feel a little awkward. I know it's going to be a long road back."

The other seed to fall on the second day of the tournament was Lisa Raymond. The 17th-ranked American was ousted by countrywoman Corina Morariu in three sets.

France's Sandrine Testud, the 14th seed, downed Australian Rachel McQuillan 6-1, 6-3; sixth-seeded Conchita Martinez of Spain beat American Amy Frazier 7-6 (7-4), 6-4; and South African Amanda Coetzer, seeded eighth, defeated China's Fang Li 6-3, 6-4.

On Tuesday night, No. 5 Monica Seles beat American Tara Snyder 6-2, 6-1 and No. 9 Irina Spirlea beat Canada's Sonya Jeyaseelan 6-7 (5-7), 7-6 (7-5), 6-0.

Defying doctors, Moceanu to compete in national championships

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Defying her doctors, Dominique Moceanu has decided to risk her secure status in gymnastics and try for another national championship.

Moceanu, the only member of the 1996 U.S. Olympic women's team still competing in all events, has her gold medal, and last month became the first non-Russian to win the all-around in the Goodwill Games.

And USA Gymnastics has applied no pressure for her to compete in the national championships this week, which open Wednesday in Indianapolis.

But even though her doctors and coaches wish she wouldn't, given that she hyperextended her left knee in practice Aug. 5, Moceanu has decided to compete anyway.

The top 20 scorers from preliminaries Thursday and finals Friday will be selected for the national team, making them eligible to represent the United States in international meets in the next year.

Putting injured athletes on the national team has precedent.

Moceanu and Shannon Miller were put on the '96 team even though they couldn't compete in the final Olympic trials because of injuries.

Moceanu, now 16, became the youngest senior national champion ever at 15. She has been on national teams since she was 10, and doesn't want to stop now.

Since the Atlanta Olympics, Moceanu has lost coach Bela Karolyi, who retired from coaching elite gymnasts, and she has

grown about six inches.

The 5-foot gymnast's skills declined so much that she made last year's world championships team only because some of those who finished ahead of her in the nationals were too young to go.

She was tired of the sport and thought she might quit.

"But then I was like, 'What am I going to do?'" Moceanu said. "This is my life. I've done this all my life. And I can still do it. I'm still young."

She credited her latest coach, Luminita Miscenco, for turning her life around.

Miscenco, 25, was on Romania's national team but had her career cut short by injury. She began coaching Moceanu in January, restoring courage that the American thought she had lost.

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Commonwealth Games Moneghetti's news lifts injury gloom in Australian camp

MELBOURNE (AFP) — Australia's troubled build-up to next month's Commonwealth Games took a turn for the better Wednesday with news that long distance runner Steve Moneghetti expects to be fit to compete in Kuala Lumpur.

Amid fitness worries over fellow high-profile athletes Cathy Freeman, Melinda-Gainsford Taylor and Kieren Perkins, 35-year-old Moneghetti declared he was over the worst of a knee injury.

The defending Games marathon champion's training has been dogged for the past four months but a race last weekend renewed his confidence of competing in the 10,000m at his fourth Commonwealth Games.

Moneghetti said he would make a final decision after contesting the national cross country championships in Canberra on August 29-30.

"The knee has improved a bit. I had a race at the weekend and went okay and my knee pulled up very well," he said Wednesday.

"I am on the up and should be fine I hope — unless it flares up I'm pretty confident I'm going."

Moneghetti injured the knee prior to the London marathon last April when he fell and landed on a kneecap.

"When you are going to your fourth Commonwealth Games you're not going there just to make up the numbers, you want to be competitive and run at a high level."

"I have been able to get some good training done in the last month or so

'Opening ceremony tickets sold out'

KUALA LUMPUR (AP) — Tickets for the opening ceremony of the Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games have sold out and closing ceremony seats are almost fully booked, a news report said Tuesday.

Ticket sales for the games, which run from Sept. 11 to Sept. 21, reached 299,065 over the weekend. Youth and Sports Minister Muhyiddin Yasin was quoted as saying in the New Straits Times newspaper.

The figure included some 57,000 tickets on sale for the Sept. 11 opening ceremony. Thirty thousand additional seats had been reserved for athletes, guests and officials.

But officials were facing an uphill task selling tickets for many events, including athletics. In a bid to fill the stands, the Games organisers on Tuesday announced they were scrapping separate tickets for the morning and evening sessions of athletics and the same ticket would be good for both.

Britain and 69 other countries that once formed the British Empire are participating in the 10-day games.

and it's given me the confidence to know I am going to go there (Malaysia) and run well."

Moneghetti, who broke through for gold in the marathon at the 1994 Games in Victoria, Canada, after a silver in 1990 and bronze in 1986, said the injury was the first major setback of his decorated career.

"I have never been injured and when you just hit your knee you don't think you are going to have any problems," he said.

"So I just kept running and it just kept staying sore, I really hadn't given

it an opportunity to get better."

Freeman's Australian doctor will remain in London for the next few days to supervise her recovery from a foot injury. She will decide by Monday whether to compete in the September 11-21 Games.

Gainsford-Taylor has declared her fitness despite a knee injury.

Triple world recordholder swim star Perkins has been forced out of the training pool with a bout of 'flu just days before due to fly out with the rest of the Australian swimming team for a training camp in Perth.

Capriati, McEnroe receive U.S. Open wild cards

NEW YORK (AFP) — Former teenage sensation Jennifer Capriati and Patrick McEnroe were among 16 tennis players to receive wild card entries into the U.S. Open, tournament officials said Tuesday.

Capriati, 22, lost her first match in the past two Opens. She reached the 1991 US Open and Wimbledon semi-finals at age 15 and was the youngest Grand Slam semi-finalist in history at 14 at the 1990 French Open.

McEnroe, a first-round loser to Australia's Richard Fromberg here last year, now spends much of his time as a television commentator.

Other women receiving wild card entries include U.S. collegiate singles champion Vanessa Webb of Duke University, U.S. junior champion Laura Granville and Americans Kristina Brandi, Samantha Reeves, Lilia Osterloh, Alexandra Stevenson and Brie Rippner.

Other men receiving wild card entries are U.S. college singles champion Bob Bryan, U.S. junior champion Andrew Park and Americans Richey Reneberg, Paul Goldstein, Taylor Dent, Alex O'Brien and Geoff Grant.

Bruguera hangs on as rain delays matches

NEW HAVEN (AFP) — Spain's Sergi Bruguera outlasted Pat McEnroe 7-6 (7/2), 3-6, 6-3 here Tuesday as rain hit the ATP International, although 23 of 24 matches were eventually completed.

The evening session was delayed by three hours, and the only second round match scheduled, between number eight seed Goran Ivanisevic and Geoff Grant, was held over until Wednesday.

Nicolas Escude of France and Marc Rosset of Switzerland were beaten. Escude led Rainer Schuttler by a set overnight after Monday rains, but when play resumed the German rallied to win 4-6, 6-4, 6-3.

Rosset was overwhelmed by qualifier Leander Paes of India 6-3, 6-0.

Three players failed to last the distance because of injury or sickness. Daniel Vacek of the Czech Republic was forced to retire with a hip injury when trailing Argentina's Hernan Gumeny 5-3, and Ivo Heuberger of Switzerland quit after losing the first set 6-4 to Dutchman Dennis Van Scheeping because of a back injury.

Italy's Diego Nargiso didn't even make it on to court because of illness, and was replaced by Alex Radulescu of Germany, who was beaten 6-2, 6-3 by another Italian, Vincenzo Santopadre.

Andrei Medvedev set up an intriguing second round clash with third seed Petr Korda by overcoming Israeli qualifier Eyal Erlich 7-6 (7/1), 6-3. Young Australian Lleyton Hewitt, who won



Sargis Sargsian, of Orange, Conn., returns a shot to Lleyton Hewitt, of Australia, in their first round singles match in the Pilot Pen International men's championship in New Haven, Conn. Sargsian lost 6-3, 6-4 (AP Photo)

his first ever ATP tournament in Adelaide in January, earned a meeting with top seed Pete Sampras by beating Sargis Sargsian 6-3, 6-4.

Jeff Tarango will bid to end the winning streak of second seed Patrick Rafter after ousting Lionel Roux 6-2, 6-2.

Rafter has won his last two

tournaments and has an outside chance of becoming the third No. 1 ranked player this year, as well as in the past three weeks.

For that to happen, Rafter must win here while neither Sampras in New Haven and Marcelo Rios in Indianapolis reach the semi-finals.

Iran's World Cup coach resigns

TEHRAN (AFP) — Jalal Talebi, who coached Iran for its historic World Cup match against the United States in June, has resigned because of "family problems," the football federation said Wednesday.

Federation official Khosrow Vali-Zadeh told newspapers that Talebi "will be unable to commit all his time to the national team for the next four or five months because of family reasons."

But he said Talebi will go back to his former position as a technical adviser for the team. Talebi played for the Iranian national team for nine years and took over as coach of the

World Cup team in May, less than a month before the World Cup finals in France.

A resident of northern California where he has coached college football teams, Talebi earned international fame after Iran's 2-1 victory in a politically-charged clash against the United States on June 21.

Talebi, in his early 50s, said in Los Angeles early this month that he would like to stay on as head coach, and would shortly be returning to Iran to discuss his future with the Iranian football federation.

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA '1'	PHILADELPHIA '2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Hisham Yanes Theatre
	TEL: 594-1141	TEL: 594-1141	TEL: 594-1141	TEL: 594-1141	TEL: 594-1141	TEL: 594-1141	TEL: 462-5155
	Robert Duvall & Tea Leoni...in DEEP IMPACT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30	Comedian Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	Robert Duvall & Tea Leoni...in DEEP IMPACT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD '2' BABY'S DAY OUT Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria GODZILLA Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Comedian Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 9:30	The Authority in the Service of the People Starring Hisham Yanes and the group For reservations call: 4640155, 4625155

Divisions at top as IOC holds doping crisis meeting

LAUSANNE (AP) — With its credibility on the line and its leaders divided, the International Olympic Committee holds an emergency meeting Thursday to face up to the spiraling doping crisis in sport.

Galvanized by a summer of drug scandals, IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch has convened the special meeting of his executive board to address the Olympic movement's most intractable problem.

Ten years after Ben Johnson was stripped of his 100-metre gold medal for using steroids at the Seoul Olympics, the use of performance-enhancing drugs is damaging the image of the sports world as never before.

In recent weeks, the Tour de France was blighted by revelations of systematic doping in cycling, top U.S. athletes Dennis Mitchell and Randy Barnes were suspended after failing drug tests, triple Olympic gold medalist Michelle Smith-De Bruin was banned from competitive swimming for manipulating a urine sample and Italy's Serie A soccer league was rocked by doping allegations.

IOC officials say Thursday's meeting is designed to set the agenda for an international doping summit scheduled for Lausanne in January.

But it will also provide the opportunity for Samaranch to explain his recent controversial remarks on the subject.

In an interview with a Spanish newspaper, Samaranch said the list of banned substances should be drastically reduced and suggested that performance-enhancing drugs should be prohibited only if they are harmful to athletes.

The statement stunned the Olympic

world, including some of Samaranch's closest advisers.

The IOC said Samaranch had been misinterpreted, but he has not denied making the statement.

Samaranch's remarks have brought out sharp divisions at the top of the Olympic hierarchy, set off bickering between rival sports administrators and weakened his own position after 18 years as the most powerful man in international sport.

Prince Alexandre de Merode, who as chairman of the IOC medical commission has led the organization's anti-doping campaign for more than 30 years, said he was "aghast" at Samaranch's comments.

"People who want to reduce the (banned) list are the people who want to let doping function," he told the French newspaper Le Figaro.

In a startling allegation, De Merode claimed that Samaranch, who is Spanish, was backing the philosophy of many doctors in Spain who "have rejected the ethics of their profession."

"One must not forget that Spanish sports, for a long time, has had tendencies toward doping," de Merode said.

Angry Spanish government officials accused de Merode of smearing Spain's reputation and demanded that he offer an explanation.

Though he is no longer on the IOC executive board, de Merode is scheduled to attend Thursday's meeting and will be expected to clear the air with Samaranch.

"A lot of people are hoping (de Merode) might retire," Australian IOC member Phil Coles said. "He's been there such a long time. You never know what he's going to say."

Jacques Rogge, an executive board

member and vice president of the medical commission, has also contradicted Samaranch's view that the banned list should be slashed.

While Samaranch argues that the list is "like a book" and needs to be simplified, Rogge says all the drugs listed should be there because they are open to abuse by athletes.

But there is also a body of opinion that the list should be trimmed of substances found in common medications which have no real performance-enhancing qualities.

Australian IOC board member Kevan Gosper said he plans to present a 10-point proposal, including the possibility of imposing financial penalties on drug cheats.

Anita DeFranz, an IOC vice president from the United States, doesn't expect Thursday's meeting to formulate new policy.

"We already have a policy on drugs," she said. "It's there. It's clear. Athletes know what it is. This is a chance to review where we've come, what the changes are and to plan the convention in January."

Many Olympic officials want governments and police forces to take a bigger role by chasing the doctors and traffickers who deal in doping substances, as occurred during the Tour de France.

"I don't think you can get a full solution to this without help from the civil authorities," IOC vice president Dick Pound of Canada said.

But German board member Thomas Bach warned that athletes should not be the police targets.

"We can't have a situation where we have to fear police raids in the Olympic village in Sydney," he said.

SPORTS N BRIEF

Jordan will not be back

SACRAMENTO (AFP) — There is a Jordan who will not be coming back to his National Basketball Association job. But it's not Michael of the Chicago Bulls. The Sacramento Kings fired coach Eddie Jordan here Tuesday, trying to erase the memories of a dismal 27-55 season. The team also opted not to renew the contract of assistant coach Mike Bratz. Jordan was 33-64 overall with the Kings, who lost 19 of their final 20 games.

Weah threatens to quit Liberian team

MILAN (AFP) — Star striker George Weah warned the Liberian Government on Tuesday that he and his teammates would quit the national side if there wasn't more help for sport in his country. The former FIFA World Player of the Year was furious with the situation, despite Liberia's 2-0 win over Niger last weekend which put them into the second qualifying phase for the African Nations Cup. Weah, back for his first day training with AC Milan since the win, said: "After the victory over Niger, I spoke to the authorities of my country. My teammates and I complained about their lack of respect and their indifference towards national sport. I warned them that if things don't change, then me and the others will abandon the national side."

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European Athletics Championship Bagach given all clear; British star taken to hospital after horrific fall

BUDAPEST (AFP) — Controversial Ukrainian shot putter Aleksandr Bagach was given the all clear here on Wednesday over weights he carried around his ankles by the European Athletics Championship organisers and will keep his European title he won on Tuesday — although the IAAF technical committee are to look at the case.

On the track all three British favourites for the men's 400 metres came through their heats although Solomon Wariso, who was sporting the inappropriate tattoo of Superman on his arm, had to scrape through as a fastest qualifier while the women's favourite Grit Breuer, who has twice returned a positive drugs test also won handsomely.

The organising jury also reinstated veteran Italian sprinter Stefano Tilli, back into the 100 metres semi-finals, after he made a full apology for most unprofessional behaviour on Tuesday night, when he ripped off the bat of a referee and put a flag between his legs.

Bagach, who has twice tested positive for drugs offences the latter time costing him his world title in Athens last year, had been accused by Yugoslavia's Dragan Peric of gaining an unfair advantage by wearing the weighted ankle attachments.

"Having examined the weighted ankle attachments worn by Mr Bagach the technical delegates do not consider them in conflict with present IAAF rules," Al Guy one of the technical delegates said.

"In arriving at this decision they have had regard to the fact that reinforced belts and wrist strappings are allowed," he added.

However, the technical delegates added that the matter would be referred to the IAAF Technical Committee to see if the rules would be revised in the future.

Peric, who had been suffering from a stomach virus, had lodged his complaint just after the competition where he finished fourth, losing the bronze medal on the final throw to Bagach's compatriot Yuri Belonog.

Wariso, who once served a ban for inadvertently taking a banned substance which was in a drink called



Gold medal winner Antonio Pinto of Portugal, center, is followed by Germany's silver medalist Dieter Baumann, left, and bronze medalist Stephane Franke also of Germany, right, in the Men's 10,000 metres final at the European Athletics Championships at the Nép Stadium in Budapest (AP Photo)

"Up Your Gas", blamed his poor performance on not being a morning person.

"I don't like getting up at six in the morning, that's usually when I'm coming in," the 31-year-old said.

"I ran too slowly in the first 200 and nearly paid for it but it was perhaps more because I thought it would be easier in the heats," he added.

Britain's other two hopes Mark Richardson, who beat Michael Johnson earlier in the season, and British record holder Iwan Thomas came through more convincingly though Thomas had to make do with second behind Spaniard David Canal, who ran a personal best.

Richardson, who won a

world relay gold in Tokyo in 1991, looked very comfortable and upped a gear when the rest of the field came back at him in the final 100 metres.

"That was really crappy! I hate running at that pace because it's just as if I am back in the novice's arena," the 26-year-old said.

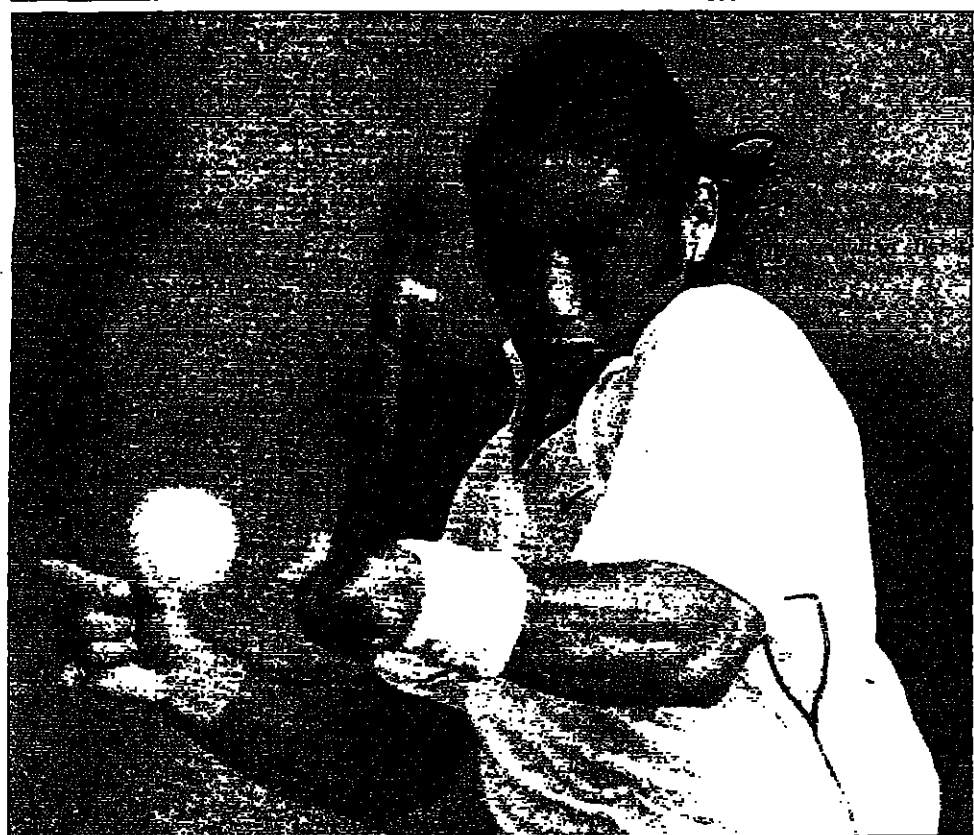
The trio's compatriot Nick Buckfield had a terrible morning as he landed heavily on his right thigh in the spot where the pole vault should be slotted and was taken off to hospital for a series of tests.

Breuer, who won in Zurich last Wednesday, showed she was the woman to beat as she

attempts to regain her European title that she won back in 1990, but was taking nothing for granted.

"Yes I am the favourite but that is often the most dangerous position to be in as they are all out to get you and until I am standing on the top of the podium I will not be taking it as my god given right," the 26-year-old said.

There were also impressive performances from her main rivals Helena Fuchsova of the Czech Republic and Great Britain's Allison Curbishley while their pace in their heat tugged along Ireland's Karen Shinkins who posted a new national record of 52.13 seconds.



Top-seeded Marcelo Rios of Chile hits a forehand during his second-round match against unseeded Bob Bryan of Camarillo, Calif., at the RCA Championships in Indianapolis. Rios advanced with a 6-4, 6-4 win (AP Photo)

Rios wins as No.1; Moya out

INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) — Chile's Marcelo Rios won his first match as World No. 1, his first hard-court triumph since late March, while second seed Carlos Moya of Spain was ousted at an ATP event here Tuesday.

Rios defeated American newcomer Bob Bryan 6-4, 6-4 in a second-round match at the one million-dollar tournament after losing a week ago at the ATP Championships despite replacing Pete Sampras atop the rankings.

"I was trying hard on every point, chasing them all," Rios said. "I'm hitting the ball well. But I still need to get into a little bit better shape."

In March, Rios won back-to-back U.S. hard-court crowns at Indian Wells and Key Biscayne to briefly snatch the top ranking but was hurt and did not win before Sampras reclaimed the summit.

Rios stands a meagre 41 ranking points ahead of Sampras, who plays this week in New Haven along with world number three Patrick Rafter.

Rios, 22, broke 476th-ranked Bryan, the United States collegiate champion, in the fifth game of each set to clinch his triumph against a crowd barking for the American.

Moya got off to a quick start but ran out of steam as Sweden's Thomas Johansson rallied to reach the third round, winning 6-7 (5/7), 6-0, 6-1.

The defeat was a setback for French Open champion Moya, who lost the final here to Jonas Bjorkman a year ago and elected not to speak with reporters after the match.

"I was afraid he was going to run away with the match, but I played very well, especially on my forehand," Johansson said. Moya broke for 3-0 in the opener, but was quickly overhauled by the persistent Swede. Johansson produced 18 aces in the upset, which lasted one hour, 41 minutes.

"If he had gotten a good start in the third set, he could have won the match," Johansson said. "It was all a matter of a few balls."

ATP Championships semi-finalist Magnus Larsson of Sweden moved into a Wednesday match against Briton Greg Rusedski thanks to a 2-6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-2 comeback against Sebastien Grosjean of France.

Rusedski, seeded third, has not played since failing to complete his first-round match at Wimbledon due to an

ankle sprain suffered at Queen's club on the grass.

"I'm not worried about the ranking or defending the U.S. Open finalist points. I'm just taking it one match at a time," Rusedski said. "I need to get back to sharpness. Things are going well. I've had eight weeks of physiotherapy. Now is the time to test the ankle."

"I've been here training since Thursday. I've been practising twice a day. My goal is to get more matches, as many as possible."

Austrian Thomas Muster beat another American outsider, qualifier Paul Goldstein, 6-2, 6-2, while 1994 champion Wayne Ferreira easily handled Canadian Daniel Nestor 6-4, 7-6 (7/4).

Gianluca Pozzi scored the day's only upset, eliminating Italian compatriot Andrea Gaudenzi 7-6 (7/4), 6-1.

Andre Agassi and Bjorkman begin play Wednesday with second round matches.

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Islamist coalition warns U.S. of new attacks — paper

CAIRO (AP) — A coalition of Islamist groups warned that "strikes will continue from everywhere" against the United States, the group said in a statement published Wednesday in a leading Arabic newspaper.

The communiqué from the World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders, formed by exiled Saudi millionaire Osama Ben Laden in February, was printed in the London-based daily Al Hayat.

"The coming days will guarantee, God willing, that America will face a black fate similar to that of the Soviet Union," the statement said. "Strikes will continue from everywhere, and Islamists will appear one after the other to fight American interests." The Jihad front is believed to be a coalition of six Islamist groups from Egypt, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Its statement was sent Tuesday to Al

Hayat's bureau in Cairo.

Al Hayat said it came with three other statements from the Islamic Army for the Liberation of Holy Shrines, which claimed responsibility for the two deadly bombings of U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya on Aug. 7.

In one statement, the Holy Shrines group said it would "continue shipping more American dead bodies to their unjust government... until we humiliate America's arrogance and roll its dignity in the mud of defeat." The group had not been heard of before the explosions in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, which left 257 people dead and more than 5,500 injured. Among the dead were 12 Americans.

The separate statement from the Jihad coalition tied the motive for the embassy attacks to U.S. involvement in Somalia in the early 1990s.

"The two embassies,

which the Islamic Army for the Liberation of Holy Shrines bombed, have supervised the killings of at least 13,000 Somali civilians in the treacherous attack led by America against this Muslim country," it said.

A U.N. peacekeeping mission dominated by the United States landed in Somalia in late 1992 and provided protection for food distribution to help end a famine in the east African country.

But the U.N. force became bogged down in Somalia's factional fighting, and 18 U.S. soldiers were killed before the force withdrew in 1995 without solving the political problems.

The statement from the Jihad coalition said that when the Holy Shrines group claimed responsibility for the bombings "it became clear to everyone, including the American people, that we were not

lying when we warned them." The group had issued a warning of attacks, printed in Al Hayat, several days before the embassy bombings.

Al Hayat said the three other statements of the Holy Shrines group were titled "Open Letter to the Kenyan People," "Congratulations" and "A Communique to People."

The first statement said that the Nairobi's bombing "was targeting the American presence only... and the Islamic Army's intention was not to hurt Kenyan people." The second was to congratulate Muslims "for taking revenge from the American Crusader criminal gang."

The third warned of more attacks and asked Muslims "not to get close to anything American so that what happened in Nairobi won't be repeated and so that they won't be hit by the fire of the soldiers of God" by mistake.

'U.S. works to block Israeli arms sale to India'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The United States has demanded that Israel halt negotiations for the sale of electronic weaponry to India following New Delhi's recent nuclear tests, the Haaretz newspaper reported Wednesday.

The newspaper's normally well-informed military correspondent said Washington was seeking to block the deal even though the defence-related electronics gear was wholly made in Israel without any U.S. technology.

Negotiations between Israel and India over the sale have been underway for a year and an Indian

delegation recently visited Israel to examine the equipment, it said.

The report did not provide details of the electronic equipment under discussion.

Washington had not objected to the negotiations until India exploded five nuclear test devices in May, triggering U.S. sanctions and prompting neighbouring Pakistan to conduct similar test blasts.

U.S. officials claim that even though the electronic gear contains no U.S. technology, the fact that a country deemed a friend of the United States is preparing to sell military goods to

India despite U.S. sanctions constitutes an embarrassment for the American administration. Haaretz said.

Washington also claims the electronics involved in the deal may be restricted by international treaty, but Israel denies this, it said.

Haaretz also reported that Israel and the United States were wrangling over another defence issue — Israeli attempts to place their own advanced radar on U.S. combat jets to be purchased in future.

Israel is currently negotiating for the purchase of the most advanced model of the F-16 fighter and has

asked to put a new radar system built by the Israeli firm Elbit on the aircraft.

The radar is said to be more sophisticated than U.S. models and Washington has refused permission to mount it on the F-16s, Haaretz said.

Instead the United States wants Israel to purchase a radar being made by U.S. firms to equip 80 F-16s to be delivered to the United Arab Emirates, it said.

If Israel agrees, it would cut the cost of the radar units for the emirates in what Haaretz said would amount to an Israeli subsidy for the Gulf state's new weaponry.

Palestinians: Israel's claim it accepted pullback is a ruse

TEL AVIV (AP) — A claim by a powerful Israeli cabinet minister that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has agreed in principle to hand over 14 per cent of the West Bank is a ruse aimed at deflecting U.S. pressure, a Palestinian negotiator said Wednesday.

Ariel Sharon, a hawk in Netanyahu's cabinet, said Tuesday that the Israel government has quietly accepted a U.S. proposal to withdraw from 13 per cent of the West Bank now and hand over an additional one per cent in a later pullback.

Sharon opposes the U.S. plan, saying it would endanger Israel's security. It is believed Sharon made the claim to embarrass Netanyahu and invite new pressure from cabinet hardliners.

Palestinian negotiator Nabil Shaath said Wednesday that Israel has indeed offered to withdraw from 13 per cent, but on condition that three per cent of that area be declared a "nature reserve" in which the Palestinians would have virtual

no say over land use.

"So what Sharon is saying is nothing but an act of deception," Shaath said, noting that the Palestinians already rejected the idea when it was first raised last month.

A one per cent pullback in a later stage also falls short of minimal Palestinian demands, Shaath said.

Sharon charged Tuesday that the Palestinians had raised new difficulties — such as claims that Israel was not allocating enough water to the West Bank — in order to invite U.S. pressure and squeeze more concessions from Israel.

Shaath countered that Sharon was trying to shift blame from Israel to the Palestinians for the prolonged deadlock in the negotiations.

The Israeli offer, as portrayed by Sharon, would leave Israel still in control of 60 per cent of the West Bank, Shaath said.

"He [Sharon] knows we will reject this and hopes that this would get the blame off Israel and on us," he said.

In other developments

Wednesday, Israeli troops demolished a Palestinian home near the West Bank town of Hebron because it was built without a permit.

The six-member family living in the home scuffled with soldiers, and two women were taken to a nearby hospital with bruises.

"This is terrorism, and I say it in front of everyone that I will be the next [suicide] bomber in Israel because I have nothing to lose," said the homeowner, Atta Jaber, 33.

Since the start of the year, Israel has demolished 112 homes in the West Bank and 14 in Arab neighbourhoods in occupied Arab East Jerusalem.

Israel says it is merely enforcing building regulations. The Palestinians claim Israel is trying to limit population growth in disputed areas where it wants to cement its control.

The United States has called on Israel to refrain from demolishing homes and expanding Jewish West Bank settlements.

Sudan declares 'general mobilisation'

KHARTOUM (AP) — Sudan's ruling party has declared a "general mobilisation" and called on Egypt to hand over Sudanese terrorists following a meeting by Sudanese opposition groups in Cairo.

The National Congress announced the mobilisation "to face the challenges confronting the nation and the open provocations from within Egyptian territories by the remnants of rebellion and the mercenaries who... work against Sudan's Islamic orientation." The congress made the announcement in a statement Tuesday, and it was carried Wednesday in Sudanese newspapers. A "general mobilisation" calls on citizens to be ready to support the government in event of danger.

The statement followed a three-day meeting in Cairo by the National Democratic Alliance, an umbrella group of Sudanese opposition parties.

The alliance issued a statement Tuesday rejecting Sudan's new constitution, which is based on Islamic law. It also vowed to keep up the struggle against the Khartoum government.

On Wednesday, the Sudanese Workers Trade Federation issued a statement denouncing the convening of an opposition conference in Egypt.

Ali Osman Mohammed Taha, Sudan's first vice president, also commented on the Cairo meeting in a speech to military trainees Tuesday.

"We are saying in your name to the enemies of Sudan who gathered in Cairo, your alliance will end up in ashes," he said.

The National Congress statement said Egypt's hosting of the meeting amounted to interference in Sudan's internal affairs. It said Egypt should hand over Sudanese terrorists if it wanted to improve relations.



This is a caricature drawn by Uruguayan artist Sabat of U.S. President Bill Clinton which appeared on the front page of the Buenos Aires daily Clarin, Argentina's largest daily newspaper, Tuesday. The U.S. president addressed the nation Monday evening after a grand jury hearing investigating the Monica Lewinsky case (AP photo)

Palestinians despair of Lewinsky's sway over peace

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Since she first splashed onto the world's television screens seven months ago, Monica Lewinsky has wielded a curious sway over the course of Middle East peacemaking.

It was at Yasser Arafat's Oval Office news conference with President Clinton, back on Jan. 22, that the U.S. president first fielded questions about his relationship with the former White House intern.

Palestinians had hoped Clinton would use the opportunity to castigate Israel for failing to break a deadlock in the peace talks and agree to a double-digit troop pullback from the West Bank.

Instead, with Arafat watching bemusedly from his side as reporters peppered Clinton with questions about whether he had had sex with the 24-year-old Lewinsky.

Seven months later, Clinton's admission that he had a relationship with Lewinsky that was "not appropriate" has left the Palestinians despairing that he will ever return to a position of enough strength to pressure Israel to make concessions.

"Since this story surfaced, the American administration has been paralysed, unable to react to Israeli intransigence," the Al Quds newspaper lamented Wednesday.

The paper's editorial cartoon showed a grinning Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu thinking "Inappropriate Behaviour" as Clinton tries to put pressure on him.

Palestinian legislator Ziad Abu Amr said Clinton's new admissions mean that "Neither he nor his administration can influence the Israelis."

"This means a weakening of the already almost-absent American role, and an

increase in Israeli intransigence," Abu Amr told the Voice of Palestine radio station Wednesday. "We should not expect any active American role in the peace process." Hanan Ashrawi, a prominent Palestinian political figure, said the Palestinians have been "paying the price of a besieged administration incapable of taking bold positions in the peace process." "The peace process has been paying the price of a shaken president and the diversion of attention," she said Tuesday.

Palestinian officials, however, gave no credence to rumours — wildly popular on the Palestinian street — that Lewinsky, who is Jewish, was an Israeli agent sent to weaken Clinton.

Yasser Arafat, asked Tuesday if Clinton's admission would impede American efforts to advance the peace process, said only: "We hope not."

'U.S. kept Israel in dark over recent Iran missile test'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The United States knew in advance that Iran was going to test a new missile last month but withheld the intelligence from Israel for fear the Israeli army might try to disrupt the launch, the Haaretz newspaper reported Wednesday.

The article, which quoted a "reliable intelligence source" in Israel, contradicted earlier reports that both Israel and the United States were caught by surprise when Iran test-fired its new medium-range missile July 22.

The intelligence source said it was now clear Washington had prior knowledge of Iranian preparations to test the

Shahab-3, a missile reportedly developed with Russian technology and which is capable of reaching Israel.

The Americans declined to let Israel in on the secret for fear the Israeli military would try to disrupt the Iranian launch," Haaretz quoted its source as saying.

It suggested the U.S. decision was also a result of the loss of trust over the past year between the U.S. administration and the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu due to the deadlock in the peace process.

According to U.S. and Israeli experts, the Shahab-3 has a range of 1,300 kilometres, capable of reaching

Israel, Turkey and Saudi Arabia with conventional or non-conventional warheads.

Israel has charged that Russian experts have provided Iran with the technology necessary to develop the missile despite denials from Moscow.

The chief of Israeli army intelligence, General Amos Malka, told a parliamentary panel Tuesday that the Shahab-3 would be operational by the end of 1999, according to press reports of his testimony.

Haaretz quoted intelligence officials as saying they expected Iran to carry out a second test of the missile in the coming months.



Welcome to the Internet

LONDON (R) — Princess Diana is alive. No, she was murdered by British secret agents or the devil or German neo-Nazis or arms dealers. Welcome to the Internet, where thousands of conspiracy websites are awash with wild theories purporting to explain the death — or escape — of Britain's Queen of Hearts after a high-speed car crash in Paris last August 31. A year after her death, Diana has met the same fate as Elvis Presley, the king of rock and roll. Some fans simply cannot accept that a star which shone so brightly was snuffed out in the prime of life. Like Elvis, Diana must still be alive, they insist.

Farrah Fawcett's exboyfriend guilty of beating on her

SANTA MONICA (R) — Actress Farrah Fawcett's ex-boyfriend was found guilty of having beaten her head against the ground but was cleared of a second alleged assault. Producer-director James Orr faces up to a year in jail and a \$6,000 fine after a jury convicted him on the misdemeanor charge. The jury in Los Angeles Superior Court began deliberations late Monday and reached the verdicts just after lunch Tuesday.

TV presenter turned woman causes stir on political scene

LIMA (R) — A clairvoyant turned TV presenter turned woman has upset the Latin country's traditionally macho image and caused a stir on the political scene by becoming the first transsexual to run for local office. Fulvia Celica, who changed sex to a woman and who predicts Peruvians' futures on a local television show, told Reuters that she had registered as mayoral candidate in the middle class district of Jesus Maria for Lima's October municipal elections.

'Look for another singing Taylor out there on the road'

UNIVERSAL CITY (AP) — Look for another singing Taylor out there on the road. Sally Taylor, the only daughter of James Taylor and Carly Simon, played guitar and sang a solo as her father strummed along during his show Monday night at Universal Amphitheatre in southern California. "Sally's got a record coming out soon, so find it and buy it if you can," proud papa Taylor advised the crowd.

Musician and producer 'Jean' denies pulling a gun on editor

NEW YORK (AP) — Musician and producer Wyclef Jean denies he pulled a gun on a magazine editor. Jean said Jesse Washington, editor of the new music magazine Blaze, contacted the story. "Personally, I feel like this is so he can do publicity to sell the new magazine," Jean said Friday night on MTV. "Wyclef Jean pulls no gun. Wyclef Jean plays guitar. And I have love for my family... and I have respect for the media."

Police look for a missing 9-metre high beer can

GRANDE PRAIRIE (AP) — Will the Mounties get their Molson? The Royal Canadian Mounted Police are trying to find a missing 9-metre high beer can. The elephant-sized, inflatable balloon owned by Molson Breweries disappeared from a baseball park in this northern Alberta city following a tournament last weekend. Information leading to the return of the balloon with a Molson Canadian logo would be rewarded.

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Francesco Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Report

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Social and Islamic Affairs.
Mahdi Al Farhan as Min
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Agencies

ROYAL Highness
Prince Hassan, the
on Friday received
President Ali Othman
Mohammad Isha regarding
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commercial plant in
Jordan.

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tional media to visit the
site and find the truth.
He reiterated: "We call
on the international media
to visit the site and find
the truth, and that is
the only way to resort to
the absence of such
evidence among nations
actions."

The Regent on Thursday